southern VOICE

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Back to nature
Outdoor activities heat up with the weather as gay groups hit the trails.
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Partners of gay troops wait alone

Couples face added worries under 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell'

Page 12

The military offers programs for heterosexual spouses of service members serving in the Iraq war, including support groups and emergency assistance. But the 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' policy forces gay partners to hide their relationships and miss out on opportunities for help. (Photo by Greg Bryan/AP. Photo illustration by John Nail)

SUNDAY SALES: State House passes bill to let bars open and serve alcohol on Sunday. **Page 3**

FULTON FIGHT: County Commissioner **Robb Pitts** leads new effort for partner benefits. **Page 4**

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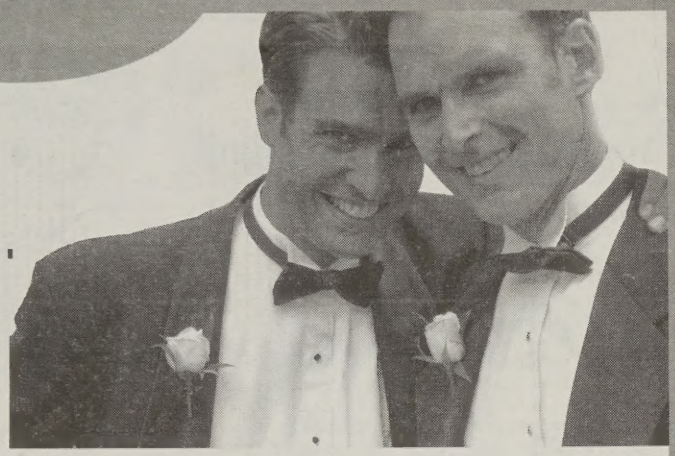

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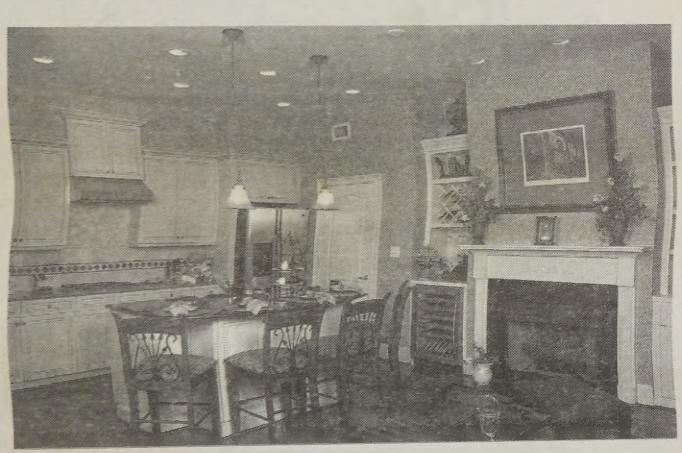

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EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

local news

House gives bars green light for Sunday sales

Bill allowing municipalities to vote on expanding alcohol hours goes to Senate

By CHRISTOPHER SEELY

State Rep. **Karla Drenner** (D-Avondale Estates) said her vote in favor of an amendment to the Sunday alcohol sales bill was a compromise in response to the request by Atlanta Mayor **Shirley Franklin** to stop Sunday sales at midnight. (Photos by R.O. Youngblood)

The state House of Representatives voted 113-47 on April 7 in favor of a bill to allow Sunday sales of alcohol in bars, two weeks after the measure appeared stalled due to opposition from Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin's administration.

"It passed. I was pleased," said Rep. Karla Drenner (D-Avondale Estates), sponsor of the bill and Georgia's only openly gay state legislator.

The measure, backed by Atlanta's gay Bar Owners Association, now heads to the state Senate, where it is assigned to the Regulated Industries & Utilities Committee. It must pass through the committee to get a Senate vote in the last six days of the legislative session or it dies until next year.

"It will absolutely go to the [Senate] floor," Drenner said at press time Wednesday, indicating possible action by the end of this week.

Dubbed the Uniform Closing Hours Act, the bill sets the stage for counties or municipalities to authorize the sale of alcohol "for consumption on the premises" up to 4:30 a.m. each day and starting as early as 12:30 p.m. on Sundays.

GOLD DOME WATCH

But whether the legislation will result in increased hours for alcohol sales in Atlanta remains in question.

Currently, the city of Atlanta requires bars to close at 4 a.m. on weekdays, and a state law currently facing legal challenge prevents bars from selling alcohol on Sundays.

The bill calls for "local referendums by local governments," Drenner said on the House floor Monday. The "governing authority" in each area would pass an ordinance or resolution drafting the referendum, which would then require approval from local voters.

Atlanta City Council President Cathy Woolard, who is gay, will not discuss possible implications of the bill on the City Council, according to Doug Hall, Woolard's communications director.

City Council member Anne Fauver — who is also gay and represents District 6, home to many of Atlanta's gay bars — declined to say whether she would try to usher an ordinance through the council to extend Sunday bar hours until the bill makes it "through the state."

"I'll make my judgement based on the final outcome," she said.

The mayor has indicated she may oppose a referendum on expanding bar hours.

In the days leading up to the state House vote, Franklin cited public safety concerns and advocated a compromise that would stop Sunday alcohol sales at midnight.

"Should [those concerns] not be addressed, I reserve the right to comment should a referendum come before the residents of Atlanta," Franklin said.

Mayor's concerns a 'local issue'?

Controversy erupted two weeks ago between Franklin's office and legislators over the city's role in lobbying against Drenner's bill.

The House Rules Committee passed the bill on March 25, setting the stage for a vote by the full House later in the week. But about two hours later, according to Drenner, a legislative liaison from Franklin's office told her the bill was pulled from the voting schedule because of Franklin's objections.

Rep. Calvin Smyre (D-Columbus), chair of Rules Committee, confirmed the move. "Somebody from the mayor's office contacted me and asked me to hold the bill," he said.

Smyre later released the legislation, setting up the April 7 floor vote.

Franklin has refused interview requests on the issue since the controversy began. The mayor could not be reached for comment this week because she is in Washington, D.C., according to Sandra Walker, her communications director.

In an opinion column published in Southern Voice last week, Franklin said she had "not publicly or privately taken a position on House Bill 493."

Still, Franklin said Atlanta Police Chief Richard Pennington had expressed concern that "at present staffing levels, the Atlanta Police Department is not yet equipped to handle expanded nightclub and bar hours on Sunday nights."

Franklin said she contacted Drenner and asked her to "work with Chief Pennington to address his concerns" and amend the legislation to stop Sunday alcohol sales at midnight.

But Drenner said the mayor's concern was a "local issue," whereas House Bill 493 "pertained to the state as a whole."

Under the bill, municipalities can set their own hours and only need to use the hours outlined in the legislation as parameters.

"She could change it herself," Drenner said.

Floor debate focuses on hours

On Monday, Drenner presented the Uniform Closing Hours bill to a House that at first didn't seem eager to pass it.

Rep. Tom Bordeaux (D-Savannah) was the first to take to the microphone to ask Drenner questions about the bill after she yielded the well to questions.

"Why have the bill?" he asked.

Bordeaux grilled Drenner about the title of the bill, claiming that it was a misnomer. The name "Uniform Closing Hours" doesn't make sense because the measure would allow each municipality in the state of Georgia to set its own, possibly varying, hours, Bordeaux said.

Drenner agreed that the bill would leave it up to local governments to decide on the hours.

Continuing to argue against the bill, Bordeaux asked if the measure didn't, in fact, "encourage" youth and adults to drive drunk.

Drenner did not respond to his question.

Rep. Bob Holmes (D-Atlanta) proposed an amendment to the bill to emphasize that local governments would not be mandated to allow bars to remain open until 4:30 a.m. every day of the week and to open at 12:30 p.m. on Sundays.

The amendment replaced 12:30 p.m. and 4:30 a.m. with blank spaces. The change would "make it clear" that "each municipality is to decide" on the hours of operation, Holmes said.

Holmes also addressed a question from the floor about whether his proposal came at the suggestion of the city of Atlanta. Holmes replied that it was "not the city of Atlanta's amendment."

The amendment failed, 93-65, with Drenner voting in favor.

"I believe the attempt was to clarify the Sunday hours provision," she said. "It seemed to me that Rep. Holmes thought it was unclear on how the bill was written."

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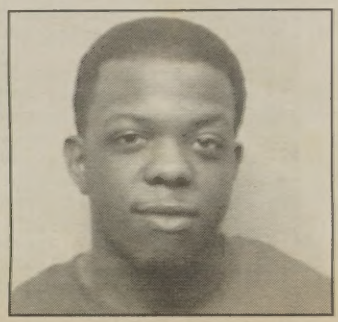
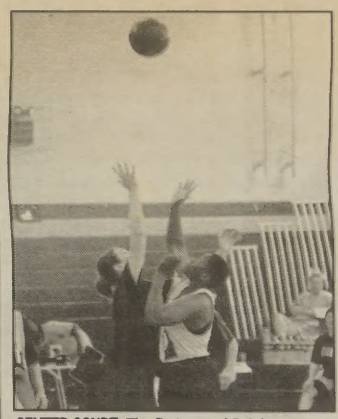


HATE TRIAL: The trial of Aaron Price, a former Morehouse student accused of a hate crime after beating a fellow male student in the dorm showers is set for June. **Page 9**



CENTER COURT: The first annual Rainbow Classic Basketball Tourney attracted lesbians from all walks of life, including some local politicians. **Page 25**

correction

An article on the death of Joshua Duce (Obituaries, March 28) contained an incorrect address for YouthPride, the gay youth organization where Duce was a board member. Duce's family requests that memorial contributions be made to YouthPride at 302 Howard Ave., Decatur, Ga. 30030. 404-378-7722. Southern Voice regrets the error.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Southern Voice, 1075 Zonolite Road, Suite 1-D, Atlanta, GA 30306. Southern Voice is published weekly, on Friday, by Window Media LLC. Subscriptions are $80/year for 52 issues (only $1.54 per issue).

local news

Fulton gets second try at DP benefits

New commissioner plans to introduce legislation next week

By LAURA DOUGLAS-BROWN

A decade after Atlanta first approved domestic partner benefits for city government employees, the county that encompasses most of the city limits is poised to again take up the issue for its workers.

The move, led by Fulton County Commissioner Robb Pitts, comes almost two years after the commission flatly rejected offering benefits for same-sex and opposite-partners.

"I think it's clear where I stand on the issue," said Pitts, who supported domestic partner benefits during his 20 years on the Atlanta City Council. "We had some other county issues to deal with first, but now I'm ready to bring it forward."

The proposed legislation would create a county registry for domestic partners and ban discrimination against registered domestic partners "in any way," including family leave policies and insurance benefits.

It defines domestic partners as "two people, regardless of their gender, who live together in the mutual interdependence of a single home. They must also meet other requirements, including living together for at least six months and being 18 or older, not married or in a domestic partnership with anyone else and "not related by blood closer than would bar marriage in this state."

Pitts is the only new member of the commission since a similar measure was defeated by a 5-2 vote in 2001. He replaced a commissioner who voted in favor of the measure, but his staff said this week he is optimistic about a better outcome this time.

"We're very hopeful that the other commissioners will support this resolution," said Harriett Thomas, chief of staff for Pitts.

Pitts plans to introduce the domestic partner legislation at the Fulton County Commission's next meeting, slated for April 16. The measure could be voted on the same day, according to Thomas.

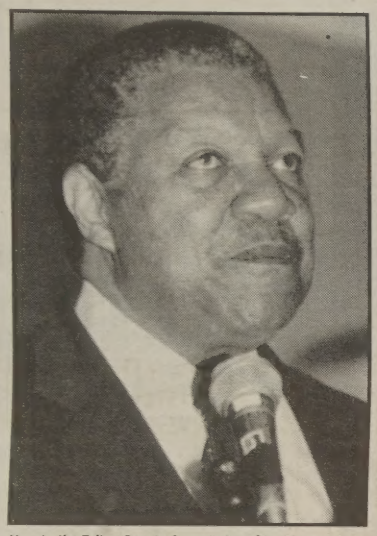
"Basically, Mr. Pitts feels that all employees in the county should be treated fairly and equitably, and they should be provided the same benefits as all other employees," Thomas said.

But Pitts' fellow commissioners were not persuaded by such arguments when they last considered offering domestic partner benefits.

Commissioner Nancy Boxill sponsored the ill-fated 2001 measure that won support from only one other commission member: Karen Webster, who chose not to seek re-election for her District 2 At-Large post and was replaced by Pitts in the 2002 election.

"This vote today was [about] 'Are we going to treat all employees in Fulton County and their partners in the same way?'" Boxill said at the time, calling the loss "stunning."

Boxill was out of the country at press time this week and could not be reached for comment, but she has not changed her support of the benefits, according to her staff.



New to the Fulton County Commission after 20 years in Atlanta city government, **Robb Pitts** said he will introduce domestic partner benefits for county workers on April 16. (Photo by CJ Parker)

Kenn to 'review' benefits

Whether the remaining five commissioners will reconsider their positions remains unclear. The legislation needs support from four of the seven commission members to pass.

Commission Chair Mike Kenn and Commissioners Emma Darnell, Robert Fulton, Tom Lowe and Bill Edwards voted against domestic partner benefits in 2001.

Lowe and Edwards did not respond to interview requests on the issue by press time.

Darnell and spokespersons for Kenn and Fulton said this week they would not take a position on Pitts' proposal because they have not yet seen the legislation.

"Just as he committed to the gay community a couple of years ago, he will review it thoroughly," said Susan Laccetti Meyers, Kenn's senior policy advisor and communications director.

Leaders from gay political groups Georgia Equality and Log Cabin Republicans maintain Kenn committed to support DP benefits, not just "review" them, when he sought and received their endorsements when he won election in 1998.

But in October 2000, Kenn's staff said he only promised to "examine" the benefits. The reversal came four months after a citizen panel, appointed by Kenn and heavily stacked with gay rights advocates, issued findings in favor of DP benefits and drafted sample legislation.

When Kenn ran for re-election in 2002, Georgia Equality endorsed his opponent and made support for domestic partner benefits a litmus test in the race, according to Allen Thornell, the group's executive director.

Georgia Equality also endorsed Pitts based on his pledge to support DP benefits, and Thornell said the group is optimistic that the measure could pass this time around — "although it's definitely not a slam dunk."

Pitts "has experience, having been City Council president, to really rally the number of votes he is going to need on the bill," Thornell said.

Darnell: County shouldn't endorse 'lifestyles'

Kenn's position has been the most controversial during the fight over domestic partner benefits in Fulton County, but Darnell proved to be the commission's most outspoken opponent of the benefits during the last debate.

"We are not talking about discrimination against employees by reason of their sexual orientation," Darnell said as the commission weighed the proposal. "We're talking about discrimination against employees by reason of their decision that they would prefer to shack and not get married."

This week, Darnell said she could not comment directly on Pitts' legislation, which had not been distributed to commissioners.

"I can say in principle that I will support any provision that supports the board's policy with respect to non-discrimination with respect to sexual orientation," she said.

Darnell said she objected to including insurance benefits in the previous bill.

"There some portions having to do with visitation in the hospital and such that I would support," she said.

The 2001 proposal that Darnell voted against would have covered same-sex and opposite-sex domestic partners, but she said this week that "if any unmarried employee would be eligible [for health benefits], and if we could afford it, I would have no problem."

"I will support legislation that provides these benefits to everyone in the class and has nothing to do with the government supporting or not supporting lifestyles," she said.

Fulton officials estimate that domestic partner benefits would cost the county $240,459 for every 100 employees that sign up, according to Meyers, Kenn's communications director.

Several studies have shown that domestic partner enrollment rates tend to be in the 1 percent to 2 percent range, according to the Human Rights Campaign, a national gay lobbying group.

Fulton County has approximately 6,500 employees. Using HRC's enrollment estimate and the county's cost estimate, enacting the benefits would likely cost Fulton $156,300 to $312,600. The county budget for 2003 is $614.4 million.

MORE INFO

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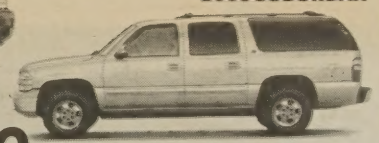

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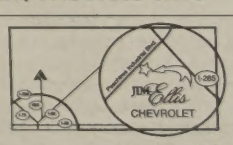

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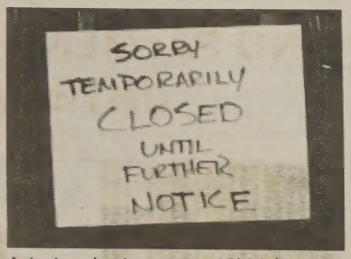
local news

Blake's to reopen for weekend

Popular gay club temporarily sidelined for management change

By LAURA DOUGLAS-BROWN



A sign turned customers away at Blake's last weekend, but officials said the gay bar will reopen and be 'better than ever.' (Photo by R.O. Youngblood)

Patrons of Blake's on the Park who were surprised to find the gay bar shuttered last Saturday should find the watering hole open in time for this weekend, according to management of the club.

The bar, located across from Piedmont Park at 227 10th St., shut down last Saturday, April 5, posting a sign at the door reading, "Sorry temporarily closed until further notice."

"It's just temporary, and our hope is to reopen by the end of the week," Bob Rust, a representative of club owner Alison Brown, said at press time Wednesday.

Brown has owned Blake's for six years, according to Rust, but closed the club for most of the week "for a change in management."

"It's not a change in ownership," he said. "We just needed to bring in some new management, and we've got some great ideas."

The bar is "still working out" potential changes in other staff, he said.

But the popular gay bar will not change much, Rust said.

"It will be Blake's as it always has been, but even better," he said.

Philip Rafshoon, owner of Outwrite Bookstore & Coffeehouse, Blake's neighbor at the corner of Piedmont Avenue and 10th Street, said his store will welcome the bar back.

"They've been here longer than anyone on the corner, and we really hope they get open as quickly as possible," Rafshoon said. "More business here helps all of us."

Rafshoon said it was difficult to discern if Blake's temporary closure affected patronage at other nearby businesses this week.

"It's been hard to tell because so many people are here with the [NCAA women's] Final Four," he said. "But the businesses in the area all relate to one another, and the more the merrier."

Sunday sales lawsuit reaches Georgia Supreme Court

High court could hear case by summer, attorney says

By JENNIFER J. SMITH

A lawsuit over Sunday alcohol sales that pits the city of Atlanta and the state of Georgia against 10 gay bars was officially docketed by the Georgia Supreme Court last week, according to an attorney for the bars.

By docketing the case, the court acknowledges receipt of the files from a lower court and can commence legal action on the issue.

Michael Clutter, an attorney in the lawsuit seeking Sunday alcohol sales in bars, said the state officially lodged its appeal on April 2.

Officials with the Georgia attorney general's office and the city of Atlanta's law department could not be reached for comment by press time.

Clutter, who also owns Bulldogs, a gay bar on Peachtree Street, called the docketing the beginning of forward momentum on the case.

"The city will have 20 days from the date of docketing to file their briefs, and then we'll have 20 days from that to file ours," Clutter said.

"After that, the court will schedule it for oral arguments, probably in June," he said. "It moves pretty fast at this point."

The city and the state are appealing a ruling by Fulton County Superior Court Judge Marvin Arrington. On Feb.5, Arrington ordered the city of Atlanta and the state of Georgia to immediately allow bars in the city to sell alcohol by the drink on Sundays.

In a lawsuit initially filed by three gay bars, Arrington ruled unconstitutional two state laws that ban alcohol sales on Sunday but provide exceptions for venues including hotels, bowling alleys, sports arenas, auditoriums, festivals and "eating establishments" that gross at least 50 percent of annual sales from food.

"By denying plaintiffs the right to engage in the exact same business activity allowed to others, [the state laws and related city of Atlanta laws] deny plaintiffs equal protection of the law and [are] therefore unconstitutional," Arrington ruled in a written order.

Enforcement of the state Sunday alcohol sales law is left to local jurisdictions, and for years, most bars in the city of Atlanta operated under restaurant licenses and served alcohol on Sundays, despite not meeting the 50 percent food sales threshold.

The city began cracking down on such bars over the last two years, forcing many to close on Sunday.

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local news

Theater changes play that portrayed 'Archie' as gay

Comic book company threatens legal action over alleged copyright infringement

By CHRISTOPHER SEELY

"Archie's Weird Fantasy," the Dad's Garage Theatre Company production that portrayed the famed comic book character as gay, last week became simply a "Weird Comic Book Fantasy."

The theater company dropped "Archie" from the play to comply with a letter sent by attorneys representing Archie Publications, Inc., accusing the theater of copyright infringement and violating federal anti-dilution laws.

The play, now titled "Weird Comic Book Fantasy," portrays a young gay comic book character — formerly "Archie" of decades-old comic book fame — discovering his sexual orientation, fighting comic book censorship and coming of age in three different time periods.

The comic book company's concern over the play is "not because of Archie's discussion of homosexuality by any means," said Leora Herrmann, the attorney who signed the demand letter.

The show premiered on schedule April 4 after Dad's Garage made changes to suit the cease and desist order.

"I believe we will be satisfied," Herrmann said.

John Sweet, lawyer and Dad's Garage board member, hopes so too.

"I think we have done the best we could to respect their artistic creations, and I hope they will do the best they can to respect ours," he said.

To avoid liability damages of up to $150,000, Dad's Garage altered several of the play's superficial components after receiving the letter a day before opening night, according to Jerre Brisky, marketing and sponsorship director for Dad's Garage.

The character names, the play's title and images used on promotional materials — all now changed — are the copyrighted property of Archie Publications, according to the demand letter.

The letter also expressed concern that the "adult-oriented play" would "dilute and tarnish" trademarks associated with Archie Publications.

Using Archie Publications' names for the play's characters is not as important as the different archetypes that the characters represent, said Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa, the playwright.

Herrmann agreed.

"The use of the names is gratuitous," she said. "We are not asking that the actual content of the play be changed."

A copy of the script reached Herrmann's hands prior to last Friday's opening night.

The first act of the play contains murder, suicide, a homoerotic steam-room scene, man-on-man kissing and a coming out scene.

In the play now known as 'Weird Comic Book Fantasy,' Buddy (**Matt Horgan**) and Jerry (**Steven L. Emanuelson**) share a moment in bed. The play dropped references to 'Archie' after attorneys representing the comic book complained about copyrights and 'adult-oriented' content. (Photo courtesy Dad's Garage)

"The risk that we see is that somebody associates it with Archie ... and thinks it is appropriate for children," Herrmann said.

Archie Publications does not disapprove of the play "inherently," but the company has to ensure that its intellectual property and anything associated with it "will be safe and appropriate for young children," Herrmann said.

But David Grabert, marketing and public relations chair for Action Cycling Atlanta, said the play as originally written never risked performance in front of children because it was marketed to adults.

Action Cycling Atlanta, a group that raises money for AIDS vaccine research, teamed up with Dad's Garage for an April 3 fundraiser, the night of the final dress rehearsal for "Archie's Weird Fantasy."

The $50 tickets for the dress rehearsal were the only ones ever sold for the play in its original version.

"I thought it was complex and did not think it in anyway diminished the quality of the Archie characters," Grabert said. "It is shortsighted that publishers of the comic would feel like they need to distance themselves from gay issues that were used in very interesting ways with their characters."

The publishers of Archie comics have long produced comics that abide by a Comics Code that forbids "illicit sex relations." The original creator and publisher of Archie, John Goldwater, authored the Comics Code that was adopted in 1954.

The code states that comics containing love-romance stories must emphasize the "value of home and the sanctity of marriage" and "sex perversion or any inference to same is strictly forbidden."

MORE INFO

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local news

Cobb DA meets with critics to discuss gay case

Activists say prosecutor plans to review trial that ended with acquittal

By JENNIFER J. SMITH

Activists representing the Injustice Out of Cobb Committee met April 2 with Cobb County District Attorney Pat Head to ask for a formal investigation into what they call the failed prosecution of a gay man's accused killer.

Ahmed Dabarran, a Fulton County assistant district attorney, was killed in May 2001 in his Roswell Road apartment. Cobb prosecutors charged Roderiqus Reshad Reed with malice murder, felony murder, aggravated assault and theft by taking in the case, but a jury acquitted him of all charges on Feb. 28.

The acquittal shocked some gay observers of the case, who said Reed's attorneys successfully employed a gay panic defense that went unchallenged by Cobb prosecutor Tom Cole.

Atlanta attorney and activist Steve Koval; Allen Thornell, executive director of the statewide gay group Georgia Equality; Marietta attorney Michael Maney; and Tom Driggers, a gay criminal defense attorney who lives in Cobb County, met with Head for about an hour last week, according to Koval.

Gay activists met April 2 with Cobb County District Attorney Pat Head to protest the acquittal in the case of **Ahmed Dabarran**, a slain Fulton County assistant district attorney. (Photo courtesy of Cobb Candelight Vigil Committee)

"The bottom line is, we want to know what went wrong with this trial," Koval said. "My hope is the DA's office will acknowledge its shortcomings on this case after they've had an opportunity to review the whole matter."

Neither Head nor Cobb District Attorney spokesperson Cathy Watkins responded to interview requests by press time.

Thornell called the meeting "introductory."

"I think he met with us just to begin to look at how serious we are to follow up on the vigil," Thornell said. "What we're doing is giving him the opportunity to demonstrate to us that his office did a good enough job of prosecuting the case."

The Injustice Out of Cobb committee, a successor organization to the Cobb Candlelight Vigil Committee, asked Head to conduct a formal investigation into his office's handling of the Dabarran murder trial, Koval said.

"The DA informed us that it is not his office's policy to launch formal investigations of trials," Koval said. "However, he did state that his office would be reviewing the case and that he would accept for consideration any questions which we might have about the handling of the case. He said he could not guarantee that he would be able to provide answers to all of our questions."

Head "emphasized that he is not homophobic and that he expects his assistant [district attorneys] to follow his lead," Koval said.

The Cobb district attorney agreed to meet with organizers again to discuss his office's review of the case and try to provide answers to some of the group's questions, Koval said.

There was no timetable provided for the review, but it could not begin for at least 30 days, because a transcript of the trial has to be ordered, he said.

The committee plans to purchase its own copy of the transcript and is seeking to raise the $3,200 necessary to do that, Koval said.

Independently, Koval said he expects to be able to start reviewing trial files next week pursuant to an Open Records Request he filed almost a month ago. The county will allow Koval to view the file, but not remove it from the office.

The meeting with Head came on the heels of a March 22 vigil where about 250 people gathered on Marietta Square to honor Dabarran and protest the gay panic defense, in which a person accused of assaulting a gay victim claims the attack was necessary to fend off sexual advances.

During the trial, Reed admitted striking Dabarran with a pot, but defense attorneys focused on allegations that Reed was allegedly forced at gunpoint to have sex with Dabarran.

Defense attorneys also portrayed Dabarran as leading a double life — a well-respected prosecutor by day who at night cruised for gay sex — and critics said the Cobb prosecutor did not do enough to counter the tactic.

"Continued public pressure would hold them accountable and make a difference in future cases like this," Thornell said.

MORE INFO

Injustice Out of Cobb
Public planning meeting
April 12, 10:30 a.m.
Outwrite Bookstore & Coffeehouse
991 Piedmont Ave.
www.CobbCandlelightVigil.com

Minority in the Majority

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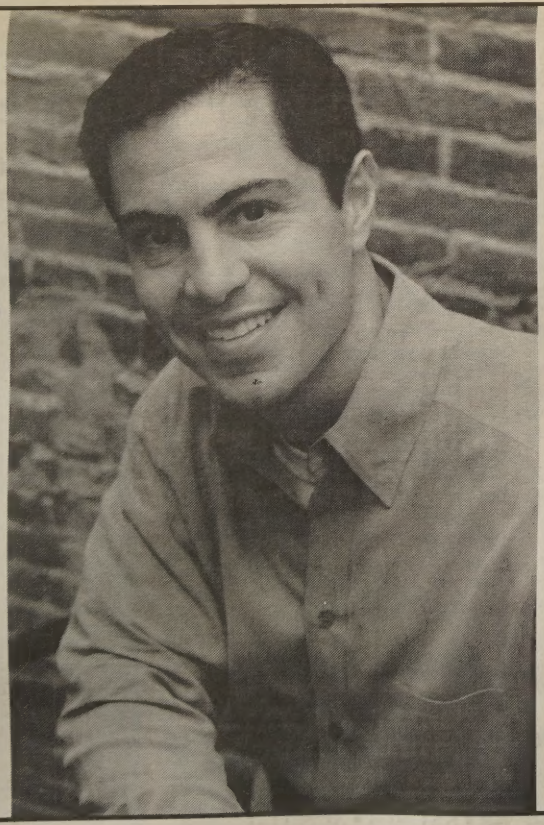

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local news

Trial set in alleged Morehouse hate crime

Victim loses bid for student government president

By JENNIFER J. SMITH

After months of quiet waiting in the case of Aaron Price, the former Morehouse College sophomore accused of a hate crime in the beating of a fellow student last November, Fulton County prosecutors announced last week the case is scheduled for trial.

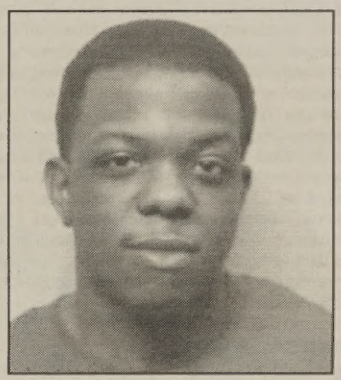
The case is on the June 2 trial calendar before Fulton County Superior Court Judge Jerry Baxter, according to Erik Friedly, spokesperson for the Fulton County district attorney's office, which is prosecuting the case.

"We feel that we have a strong case," Friedly said.

Holly Hughes, head of the Fulton district attorney's hate crimes unit, will lead the prosecution.

Price has been out of jail on a $100,000 bond since mid-November. His attorney, Kevin Franks, did not respond to interview requests by press time.

Price is accused of beating fellow student Gregory Love "approximately six to seven times, about the face, head, shoulders, back and arms" with a baseball bat in the bathroom of the Brazeal Hall dormitory on Nov. 3, according to an incident report filed by the Morehouse College Police Department.



The case of former Morehouse sophomore **Aaron Price** is on the June 2 trial calendar, according to the Fulton County district attorney's office. (Photo courtesy of Fulton County)

Love, who is nearsighted and wasn't wearing his glasses, told police he glanced at Price in the shower because he thought he was his roommate.

Price was expelled from Morehouse two days after the attack. He was formally charged with aggravated assault, aggravated battery and a hate crime in a Jan. 9 arraignment. Price pled not guilty.

The hate crime charge may be the first time the state's hate crime law was specifically invoked to prosecute anti-gay bias.

Neither Love nor Price has spoken publicly about the alleged assault.

Love, who has reportedly told some Morehouse students he is not gay, recently ran for student government president at the private, predominantly African-American school.

Few Morehouse students seemed to respond to Love's platform of diversity and tolerance, voting in former Morehouse SGA treasurer Lodriguez Murray by a landslide of more than 80 percent.

Juan Smith, a gay Morehouse senior, called the election last week "predictable."

"People weren't responding to him," Smith said. "The vast majority of the student body harbors some level of homophobia, and the gay students feel like he rejected us last fall, so why would we help him now?"

Gay students and activists criticized Morehouse officials for refusing to call the attack a hate crime, but softened their stance as Morehouse officials took public steps to address homophobia on campus.

Morehouse President Walter E. Massey did not respond to interview requests but released a general statement.

"I am committed to fostering an environment at Morehouse where no act of violence — regardless of its motivation — is tolerated," Massey said.

Morehouse officials issued a statement on Nov. 20 announcing a Blue Ribbon Panel on Tolerance & Diversity, including Peter Gomes, a gay professor of Christian Morals at Harvard University, and two others.

This week, Morehouse acknowledged five other members on the panel, including Dr. Robert M. Franklin with Emory University, Allan Gilmour with Ford Motor Company, Dr. Deborah Prothrow-Stith with Harvard University, Dr. Roosevelt Thomas with the American Institute for Managing Diversity, and the Community Foundation of Greater Atlanta's Phillip Rush.

"The administration is taking steps to solicit input from students, faculty, staff, and alumni on the current environment at Morehouse and on best next steps," said Rush, who is gay.

A report from the panel is expected in June, according to a Morehouse press release.

Khalid Kamau, a spokesperson for ASSEFA, an ad hoc committee convened in response to the Morehouse attack, called recent events at the college encouraging.

"Coming out for me was a process, and I think it's fair to say Morehouse should be allowed the same process, to take time and do it in steps," he said.

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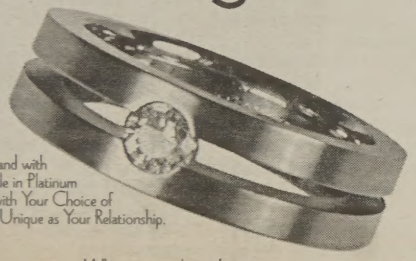

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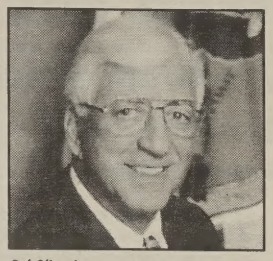
national news

Fla. politician apologizes for comment linking gays, porn

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. — Hollywood Commissioner Sal Oliveri drew protests from gay residents when he spoke out April 2 against the city allowing an adult entertainment business, the South Florida Sun-Sentinel reported. "Wake up America ... otherwise you have a pervert or a homosexual living next to you," Oliveri said during a commission meeting. Almost a dozen protesters gathered outside of City Hall two days later to demand an apology. "I want you to know I'm offended for anyone to say my sexual category throws me into a pedophile category," Carol Hoehn, a pediatric nurse, told Oliveri after he came outside to meet with them. Oliveri, a 13-year veteran of the commission, apologized for including gays in his criticism. "Everyone who is righteous has a right to live the way they do," he said.



Sal Oliveri, a commissioner in Hollywood, Fla., apologized after being criticized for anti-gay comments he made during a recent commission meeting.

ACLU sues on behalf of gay Ark. student

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — A federal lawsuit filed by the ACLU on April 8 claims that the Pulaski County Special School District violated the constitutional guarantees of free speech, equal protection, privacy and separation of church and state in its treatment of gay student Thomas McLaughlin, 14. Over the course of 18 months, school officials at Jacksonville Junior High School allegedly told the teen's parents he is gay, forced him to keep quiet about his sexual orientation and suspended him for not doing so. "My school forced me out of the closet when I should have been allowed to come out to my family on my own terms and when I thought it was the right time," McLaughlin said earlier this month. "And now the school has been trying to shove me back into it ever since." The lawsuit seeks an injunction on further action against McLaughlin. "We're taking them to court to ensure that other lesbian and gay students in the district wouldn't face similar discrimination said James Esseks, litigation director for the ACLU's Lesbian & Gay Rights Project.

S&M convention prompts protests in Okla. city

EDMOND, Okla. (AP) — A S&M leather convention last weekend, dubbed Tribal Fire 2003, raised the hackles of local religious leaders. Paul Klassen, president of the Edmond Ministerial Alliance, urged Christians to devote the weekend to prayer and fasting. "We ask God to deal, forgive and deliver all who are in bondage to a self-destructive life," the alliance said in a statement. The event, held April 4-6 at the Ramada Plaza Hotel Edmond, featured seminars and demonstrations by nationally recognized S&M leaders. "The hotels wouldn't invite us back if we were a problem," said Susan Wright, spokesperson for the National Coalition for Sexual Freedom. The NCSF spoke out last year when complaints from religious groups prompted Cendant Corporation, the hotel franchiser that includes Ramada and Howard Johnson, to issue a letter warning local hotels about booking "controversial guests." In a clarification letter sent to the coalition, Cendant promised to honor the rights of franchisees to sell rooms and meeting space to "the persons of their choice."

Colo. student suspended for calling referee 'gay'

GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. (AP) — A sixth-grader whose ball was called out of bounds during a playground game was suspended for two-days for saying the call of the student referee was "gay." West Middle School student Ben Madison, 12, said he thought the word meant "dumb" until his mother explained it. Principal Jody Mimmack said students are warned about such behaviors before they are suspended. "We work very hard to create a safe environment for students," Mimmack said. The principal said Madison also would have been suspended if he had referred to the playground call as "dumb" or if he had teased the other student about a hairstyle or ethnicity. But Madison's mother complained her son was being treated "as a test case."

Lesbian teacher in Utah wins effort to oust her from job

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — The Utah Supreme Court on April 4 left it up to education officials whether to fire a lesbian high school teacher. The ruling was a victory for psychology teacher Wendy Weaver, who came under attack from parents and students at Spanish Fork High School in a heavily Mormon part of Utah. Teachers are required by law to be moral models for their students. A lawsuit accused Weaver of failing to be a good role model because her sexual orientation conflicted with state laws prohibiting sodomy. Weaver, who now uses her unmarried name Wendy Chandler, said the court's decision was a relief. "What they were going after was not really within their right as citizens to do," Weaver said of her critics. Weaver disclosed her sexual orientation when asked by curious students in 1997. Shortly thereafter, the high school barred her from talking about it, and Weaver later won a federal lawsuit against the Nebo School District for that requirement. Parents and students tried to remove Weaver by complaining to the local school board, but the district did not fire the award-winning, 20-year teacher.

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national news

Little suport for partners of military gays

MCC churches plan to provide services not offered by military

By LOU CHIBBARO JR.

Lauren, the domestic partner of a senior Navy enlisted person, drove her partner to the California port last November so she could embark on the destroyer that would soon set sail for the Persian Gulf and the expected war in Iraq.

Hundreds of teary-eyed but enthusiastic spouses and family members waived to their loved ones in the military as the giant ship pulled away from the dock.

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But "Lauren," a lesbian who asked to remain anonymous to protect the identities of the couple, was not among them.

"I dropped her off that day," Lauren said. "But I did not get out of the car. We said our good-byes at home. It was for her safety — of not being discovered."

Lauren's partner is among the thousands of gays in the military deployed to the war in Iraq, while Lauren is among the partners left behind who must conceal the true nature of their relationships.

Gays deployed to Iraq and other locations in the Persian Gulf region must endure the same fears and family disruption associated with war as their heterosexual counterparts, according to officials with the Serivcemembers Legal Defense Network, a military watchdog group that assists gay service members.

But unlike their heterosexual compatriots, SLDN says, gay service members and their same-sex spouses must endure the added fear of being ensnared in the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, which calls for the immediate discharge of gay service members who disclose their sexual orientation.

Although gays can secure a discharge under the policy whenever they wish by coming out of the closet, few chose to do so, said Steve Ralls, SLDN's communications director.

Ralls and Kathy Wescott, an SLDN attorney, said the organization is flooded with inquiries by gay services members seeking advice on communicating with loved ones at home without violating the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.

Rev. **Marty Luna-Wolfe**, pastor of New Life Metropolitan Church of Hampton Roads, said her church is one of the MCC churches across the country that will offer support services to partners of gay service members deployed to the war in Iraq.

Benefits missing in action

On top of the pain of saying goodbye to their loved ones, partners of gays in the military discover that they do not qualify for a wide range of military programs available to other service members' families. Among them are spouse support groups, emergency financial aid and regularly scheduled briefings on the status of the units to which service members are deployed.

The Metropolitan Community Churches, a Los Angeles-based network of gay-supportive Christian denominational congregations in cities throughout the U.S, has stepped in to provide some support services to partners of gays in the military, said Rev. Marty Luna-Wolfe, pastor of the New Life Metropolitan Community Church of Hampton Roads, Va.

But Luna-Wolfe said congregations like hers, which ministers to gay service member stationed at the giant Norfolk, Va., Naval base, don't have the resources to match all of the services the military provides.

Conscientious objector says he's gay. Page 12

There is little the church can do to alter the military's rules on partner notification, where gay partners can only be classified as ordinary friends on a special military list of next of kin. The military uses that list to contact the families of service members killed or wounded in action.

"The military will contact everybody on the list," said Heather, the partner of an Iraq-bound Army reservist who was called into active duty last month. "But it will take longer for those who are not blood relative to be contacted."

'I'm going'

Heather, 26, who also asked to remain anonymous, has lived with her partner outside Philadelphia for more than eight years. The partner, 40, is an officer who has been in the Army reserves for more than 15 years and works full-time in a professional field in civilian life.

Heather described how she learned that her partner's Army reserve unit had been activated last month and was being shipped out with less than two weeks notice.

"One day she came back from drill," Heather recalls. "She just hugged me and would not let go. I said, 'What happened?' She said, 'I'm going.' So we had about a week to get our lives in order."

Heather drove her partner to the airport, where the partner flew on her own to join her unit at a military base in the U.S. The partner expects her unit to be transported to the Persian Gulf, most likely Kuwait, within a week or two, Heather said.

The military offers programs for heterosexual spouses of service members serving in the Iraq war, including support groups and emergency assistance. But the 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' policy forces gay partners to hide their relationships and miss out on opportunities for help. (Photo by Greg Bryan/AP. Photo illustration by John Nail)

Military families are invited to see their service member loved ones depart for their overseas journey, but Heather isn't sure if she wants to go.

"She would like me to see her. We have to be careful about our usual way of talking to each other and touching each other," Heather said.

Like Lauren, Heather said she doesn't want to compound the stress and challenges her partner faces in the coming weeks by coming out as lesbians.

"I'm at a loss," Heather said. "I've been sending her mail. I sort of take things day by day. It's very hard."

Although she doesn't think her letters are being monitored, Heather said she tries her best not to write anything that would cause problems for her partner.

"I try to keep them general, like someone who just cares about her, to make it sound like a family."

In doing this, she insisted, she is telling the truth.

"I'm including our pets, a dog and four cats — a dog who is not happy his mom is gone."

Anonymous e-mails

Lauren, whose partner's ship is in the Persian Gulf, said the two consider themselves lucky because e-mail communication so far has been readily available, and the partner can sometimes call her on the ship's satellite phone.

"Her e-mail is monitored for security," Lauren said. "So I set up an e-mail account without my name. I never put my name anywhere on it. It's not fool proof, but it's safer than using my regular e-mail."

Within the confines of her anonymous e-mail messages, Lauren added, she feels free to express her true feelings.

"We feel we have to communicate with each other," she said. "I tell her I love her and I miss her. I tell her that all the time."

In describing her partner's job on the destroyer, Lauren said, "Her main duty is to sit at a console and watch a radar screen," which she said "sees a picture" of the surface and the air, including all ships, planes, and missiles in the Gulf.

"If you want to know if the Gulf is dangerous, it is," she said. "The entire Gulf is considered a combat zone and a hot spot."

Luna-Wolfe of the MCC Church in Hampton Roads said gay service members and their partners have been members of her congregation for years. She said the sudden deployment of thousand of troops in the Norfolk area, which is home to eight separate military installations, placed a great strain on military families, especially partners and loved ones of gay service members.

"Like any denomination, our military members are coming to us for support," she said. "It's a place for partners and loved ones to talk and cry. It's a place where they know they're not alone."

Like family members of all service members, Luna-Wolfe said partners of gay troops engaged in combat in Iraq have been glued to their televisions, their emotions swinging from a sense of pride and joy to fear and horror. The gay service members, who mostly have adjusted to the task of having to conceal their sexual orientation, are sending back message of confidence, she said.

"When they get to a phone — it's not very often — they always say, 'We're going to be alright.' They say that all the time," Luna-Wolfe said.

Heather said the assistance that MCC churches plan to offer is sorely needed.

"The one thing I would like people to know is we are so disconnected," she said. "I have been left out of the loop of families of service members. ... I don't have access to any of this."

MORE INFO

Servicemembers Legal Defense Network
P.O. Box 65301
Washington, D.C. 20035
202-328-3244
www.sldn.org

international news

AIDS a challenge from God, South African official says

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (AP) — AIDS might be a challenge from God for South Africa to care for its people, Health Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang told religious leaders. Tshabalala-Msimang spoke as she unveiled an interfaith initiative designed to combat the epidemic through increased counseling and information. "Perhaps HIV and AIDS is God's way of challenging us to care for our people, to support the dying and to appreciate the gift of life," she said, adding that the crisis "could also be a God-given opportunity for moral and spiritual growth, a time to review our assumptions about sin and morality." About 4.7 million South Africans — one in nine — have HIV, more than any other country in the world. AIDS activists blame Tshabalala-Msimang for failing to provide anti-AIDS drugs to the general population. Government officials insists this would be far too expensive. Tshabalala-Msimang has also questioned the effectiveness of the medications.

Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, South Africa's health minister, said AIDS might be a challenge from God for the country to care for people with the disease. (Photo by Themba Hadebe/AP)

Thousands bid farewell to gay Hong Kong star

HONG KONG — Thousands of sobbing fans and celebrities lined a Hong Kong street on Tuesday to bid a final farewell to gay Cantonese pop star and actor Leslie Cheung as his body was taken to be cremated, Reuters reported. Cheung, 46, leapt out of a window of the Mandarin Oriental hotel on April 1, leaving behind a suicide note which newspapers said revealed emotional problems. His most recent movie "Inner Senses" was about a man who almost jumped from a building after being haunted by the ghost of his girlfriend. Cheung was one of the first Asian stars to be open about his sexual orientation and play gay characters in films. He was best known globally for his part in the blockbuster "Farewell My Concubine," where he played a gay Chinese opera singer, a role which closely mirrored his life. The acclaimed 1993 film scooped up a host of awards including the prestigious Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival.

Tongan minister: Paper banned because of gay claims

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Police Minister Clive Edwards angrily told a court that an independent newspaper had to be banned because it claimed the kingdom's leadership was engaged in same-sex activities, according to court papers, the New Zealand Herald reported. King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV last month banned all issues of the newspaper Times of Tonga, prohibiting any Tongan from possessing a copy of future issues. The kingdom claimed the newspaper was seditious and advocated violence and disorder. "They are saying that the leaders of this country are sodomites and poofters, that the leaders are sodomizing each other ... without mentioning any names ... which means that people might think that any of the leaders could be doing that," Edwards said during a Supreme Court hearing. He appeared to be referring to a humor column in the newspaper and a cartoon that dealt with the widespread homosexual rumors.

Canadians debate merits of allowing gay marriage

EDMONTON, Canada — Gay civil rights activists are pushing for same-sex marriage as a way to undermine the family, a federal committee was told last week, the Edmonton Journal reported. Ted Morton, a political scientist at the University of Calgary elected to the Senate in 1998, urged MPs to reject same-sex marriages. "You have some of Canada's most articulate leading gay-rights activists, not by coincidence law professors, arguing very explicitly that it's critical to rid society of so-called heterosexism, that the so-called heterosexual family be destroyed," Morton said. He was speaking to a federal committee that is traveling across Canada to get views on allowing same-sex marriage. In Vancouver, gay activists said they want the same right to marry as heterosexual couples and a parallel definition of same-sex unions is not good enough, the Canadian Press reported. Donald Meen of Dignity Canada said the inclusion of same-sex couples in the current definition of marriage would enhance it. "This is a social institution with tremendous value and there is no equivalent to it, and I say it doesn't destroy marriage in any way," he said.

Transgendered woman runs for office in Japan

TOKYO — A transgendered woman announced she is running for a local council seat in Tokyo, 365Gay.com reported. Aya Kamikawa, 35, presented her candidacy documents to an election administration committee. It is the first time a transgendered candidate has run for public office in Japan. Kamikawa left empty a blank on the application for gender. Under Japanese law, birth records showing she was born male cannot be altered, but she is on a hospital waiting list to undergo sex reassignment surgery. Officials who checked Kamikawa's documents said they will refer the case to the Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts & Telecommunications Ministry, which oversees elections. Kamikawa said she hopes her election application will be accepted with the gender entry left blank. But if she is told she must fill it in, she will choose female and insist she is not a man. "This is the first step," Kamikawa said.

From staff and wire reports

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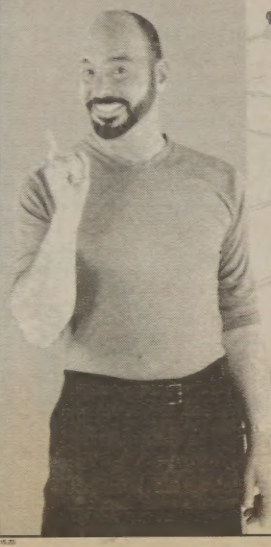

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legislative news

Texas Senate panel approves bill rejecting same-sex unions

AUSTIN, Texas — A Senate committee this week approved a bill that would prohibit the state from recognizing civil unions or marriages between people of the same sex, according to the Houston Chronicle. "The point of the bill is to protect and defend the institution of marriage in the traditional sense we always have in the state of Texas, and that's between one man and one woman," said Sen. Jeff Wentworth (R-San Antonio), sponsor of Senate Bill 7. No state permits same-sex marriages; Vermont legalized same-sex civil unions. Randall Ellis, executive director of Lesbian/Gay Rights Lobby of Texas, called the bill unnecessary. "This will not change the lives in the short run of gays and lesbians. We can't get married today; we won't be able to get married after the governor signs this bill," Ellis said. Wentworth disagreed. "People talked about discrimination as though discrimination is a bad thing. It is something we do all the time," he said. "We discriminate in this state against people under 21 years of age buying alcohol. I guess they could say we're discriminating against them." Wentworth's bill also would prohibit legal protections, benefits or marital responsibilities from being granted to same-sex partners.

Jeff Wentworth, a Republican state senator in Texas, says his bill banning civil unions 'protects and defends' marriage. (Harry Cabluck/AP)

Gender identity protection bill advances in Hawaii Senate

HONOLULU (AP) — A person's sexual orientation often is disguised and private, but switching gender identity through dress or mannerism is likely to attract attention and expose the person to public ridicule or worse, according to a key lawmaker. To help protect transgendered individuals from violence, the Senate Judiciary Committee last month approved a measure to add "gender identity or expression" as a class covered by the state's hate crimes law. It goes next to the full Senate for consideration. Hawaii's hate crimes law passed in 2001 imposes longer prison sentences for crimes motivated by race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity or national origin.

Minn. legislature strips contracts of domestic partner provision

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. — The House and Senate this week approved a compromise plan to ratify state labor contracts with raises for nearly 50,000 workers, but removed controversial health benefits for gay and lesbian domestic partners, according to the Minneapolis Star Tribune. Legislative leaders and Gov. Tim Pawlenty removed the domestic partner provisions during negotiations. The bill, which passed in both chambers after several amendments were defeated, now goes to Pawlenty, who has vowed to sign it. The Senate passed the bill 39 to 26, but not without controversial debate. Sen. Michele Bachmann (R-Stillwater) raised concerns that the costs of domestic partner benefits would be prohibitive because "the homosexual lifestyle makes them more likely to be disproportionate consumers of health-care services."

N.D. Senate upholds anti-cohabitation law

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — The state Senate has voted to keep a 113-year-old law that makes it a crime for unmarried couples to live together. A proposal to repeal the anti-cohabitation law, which says a man and woman may not live together "openly and notoriously" as if they were married, was defeated 26-21 last week. The offense is listed among other sex crimes, including rape and incest. Violations carry a maximum 30 days in jail and a $1,000 fine. "It stands as a reminder that there is right, and there is wrong," said Sen. John Andrist, a Republican. Advocates of repealing the law say it is almost never enforced, and doing so would require unorthodox police work. "You're going to have to hire the sex police to get the pictures," said Sen. Linda Christenson, a Democrat. "This is such an intrusion into the privacy of people's relationships and living agreements, that the only way to [prove a crime] is to grossly cross over the boundaries of privacy."

Controversial Minn. politician finds support in his district

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — Supporters of Rep. Arlon Lindner don't understand why people get so upset at his comments. The words "anti-gay" and "racist" were used to describe remarks the Republican made on the House floor last month. Because of those remarks, a House Ethics Committee opened hearings this week on whether Lindner brought disrepute to the body. But Lindner isn't without his supporters — people who have backed him through six election campaigns. Linda Marquardt, a friend, says she knows Lindner as a "kindhearted" man who volunteers at the local nursery on Sundays with his wife, Shirlee. "People in the community like him," she said. "He doesn't have a bigoted bone in his body. I think he's an easier target because he's undaunted and he's got that Southern accent that people make light of." The ethics hearing is the result of a complaint House members filed over comments Linder made questioning whether gay men and lesbians were persecuted in the Nazi Holocaust.

From staff and wire reports

national news

Gay Marine seeks conscientious objector status

Reservist says sexual orientation influenced his 'moral development'

By LAURA DOUGLAS-BROWN

SAN JOSE, Calif. — As an unknown number of gay soldiers serve in silence in the U.S. war against Iraq — banned from living openly by the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy — a gay Marine reservist came out earlier this month as part of his application for conscientious objector status.

Lance Cpl. Stephen Funk, 20, drew national media attention when he held a press conference April 1 outside of the 1st Beach Terminal Operations, 4th Landing Support Battalion in San Jose — much more press attention than the plight of gay soldiers serving in Iraq receives.

But Funk's case likely won't have much impact in the ongoing debate about gays in the military, according to Aaron Belkin, director of the Center for the Study of Sexual Minorities in the Military at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

"Some opponents of inclusion could cite this case as evidence that gays and lesbians are not patriotic," Belkin said. "I do not think most people would find that argument compelling, however, since even the Pentagon has agreed that gays and lesbians are as patriotic as everybody else."

At the press conference, Funk said he didn't realize the full implications of military service when he enlisted last year.

"I refuse to kill," Funk said. "It is scary to confront the military, because the military teaches you to submit to orders even when you object."

As part of his application for conscientious objector status, Funk told military commanders that he is gay.

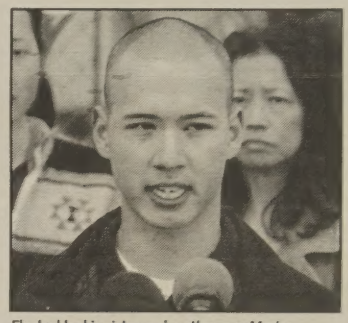
"My moral development has also been largely affected by the fact that I'm homosexual," Funk wrote. "I believe that as a gay man, someone who is misunderstood by much of the general population, I have a great deal of experience with hatred and oppression."

To some critics — including conservative talk radio hosts Rush Limbaugh and Neal Boortz — the move smacked of someone willing to take any route to get out of the military.

"What we are seeing with what he is doing is obviously someone who doesn't want to serve," said Maj. Carolyn Dysart, spokesperson for the Marine Forces Reserve.

Acknowledging his sexual orientation could make Funk eligible for discharge under the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, which bans openly gay service members.

But triggering a possible DADT discharge isn't Funk's reason for saying he is gay, according to Amy Allison, a conscientious objector from the first Gulf War who is serving as an informal adviser to Funk as he seeks similar status.



Flanked by his sister and mother, gay Marine reservist **Stephen Funk** spoke to reporters April 1 before turning himself in at his unit in San Jose, Calif. (Photo by Eric Risberg/AP)

"Stephen has never requested discharge for any other reason than being a conscientious objector — he is opposed to war," Allison said. "But there is a conflict between 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell,' which says people in the service shouldn't disclose their sexual orientation, and the regulations around applying for conscientious objector status, which require service members to be sincere and honest in outlining the influences on their moral development and why that is incompatible with military service."

Funk, who is assigned to an administrative post while his application for conscientious objector is processed, was not available for interviews, Allison said.

The reservist's admission violates DADT, but other military procedures pending against him take precedence over the policy, according to Dysart, the Marine Reserve spokesperson.

"His case is complicated not so much by the fact [that he violated DADT], but by the fact that he is a deserter," Dysart said. "That is a punitive charge that can be processed concurrent to the conscientious objector application, and could result in time in jail."

At press time, Dysart said the Marines would likely charge Funk with desertion by the end of the week.

Funk enlisted in the Marine Reserves in February 2002 and specialized in assisting with helicopter landings. He went absent without leave for several weeks when his unit was ordered to deploy to Iraq, turning himself in after the April 1 press conference when he announced he was a conscientious objector.

Dysart said Funk could have made his case much simpler had he reported for duty and filed for conscientious objector status, causing him to be assigned to a non-combat job while the request was processed.

Allison said Funk went AWOL because he needed time to complete the complicated conscientious objector application.

national news

New York activist named to head NGLTF

Foreman takes helm of group as it continues recovery from financial troubles

By LOU CHIBBARO JR.

WASHINGTON — A longtime New York gay civil rights activist was named executive director of the National Gay & Lesbian Task force last week, becoming the 15th leader of the group in its 30-year history.

Matt Foreman, 48, will take the helm of the NGLTF on May 12 — its 30th anniversary — as the organization continues to regain its footing following a tumultuous, two-year period in which it flirted with bankruptcy. Foreman will replace Lorri Jean, hired in 2001 and credited with reshaping the group, bolstering its fundraising and restructuring its mission to focus on grassroots field operations. He becomes the task force's fourth male executive director.

The announcement of Foreman's hiring came as the group received a $1.1 million gift from an anonymous donor.

"I am incredibly proud to be joining the task force team," Foreman said. "The task force is strong and focused and it has been enormously successful in advancing the cause of freedom, justice and equality for GLBT people, especially at the state and local level."

NGLTF officials would not comment on Foreman's salary.

Foreman, an attorney, has worked for gay rights causes for at least 25 years. He has served since 1997 as executive director of New York's Empire State Pride Agenda, the nation's largest state advocacy group on behalf of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender civil rights issues. ESPA played the lead role in a successful lobbying campaign last year to secure passage of a state gay civil rights bill in the New York State legislature.

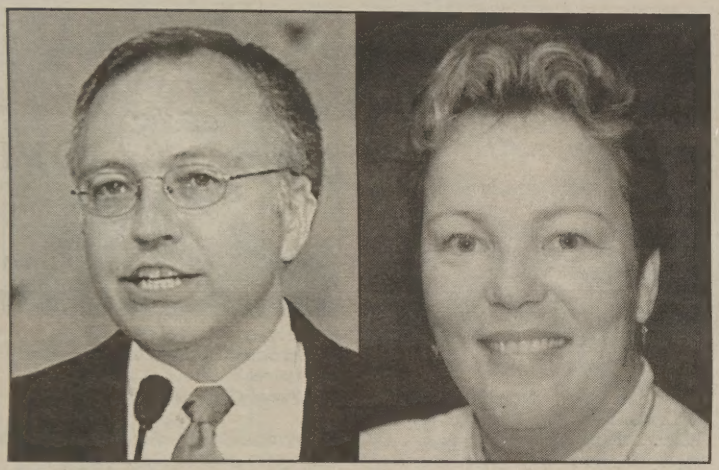
The group also played a key role in lobbying the state and federal governments to provide death benefits to the partners of gays who were killed in the World Trade Center collapse and provided individual assistance to a number of the gay survivors of the attacks.

Prior to joining ESPA, Foreman served for six years as executive director of the New York City Gay & Lesbian Anti-Violence Project, which became one of the nation's leading crime victim assistance agencies for gay people.

Before beginning work at AVP, Foreman worked for 10 years in the field of prison policy and administration, including a post as assistant commissioner of the West Virginia Department of Corrections and executive assistant to the New York City Corrections Commissioner. He also served as director of a medium-minimum security facility at New York City's Rikers Island prison.

He is a founder of Heritage of Pride, the organization that sponsors New York City's annual gay pride parade and festival and served on the board of Dignity/NY, a gay Catholic group.

As head of the AVP in the early 1990s, Foreman established a reputation as a street activist as well as a lobbyist on gay issues when he got arrested for chaining himself to the front door of New York's City Hall during a protest against police abuse of gays. In recent years, as head of ESPA, Foreman has devoted most of his time to lobbying for gay civil rights initiatives in a state government controlled by a Republican governor and a Republican Senate.



Matt Foreman (left), a longtime gay civil rights activist in New York, takes the helm of the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force next month, becoming the group's 15th leader in its 30-year history. **Lorri Jean**, executive director of the National Gay & Lesbian Task force for about two years, is leaving the post to return to return as leader of the Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center.

Restructured task force

Foreman said he would continue to reside in New York City and will work out of NGLTF's Manhattan office. He said a new deputy executive director, whom he hopes to hire shortly, will be based in the task force's Washington, D.C., office, which he said would continue to serve as the group's national headquarters.

When she was hired at the task force in 2001, Jean opened a Los Angeles office, where she lives, and became the organization's first executive director to work outside of its Washington headquarters.

Jean, a veteran of the gay rights movement who began her activist career in D.C., announced March 5 that she would leave NGLTF in May, when her current contract with the task force expires. Jean and NGLTF Deputy Executive Director Darrel Cummings, who also announced his resignation March 5, said they would resume top leadership positions at the Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center, where the two worked for six years before joining NGLTF in 2001.

Jean will become the center's chief executive officer. The center's board has yet to designate a specific position for Cummings, according to center spokesperson Bonnie Osbourne.

Foreman comes to NGLTF following a, two-year period during which many credit Jean for saving the group from near bankruptcy by strengthening fundraising efforts. Jean also ended the group's "Jack-of-all-trades" agenda, which she said provided a wide range of programs and activities —from religion and senior citizens to welfare reform — but lacked "depth" in any one area.

With the approval of the group's board, Jean adopted a restructuring plan that limits NGLTF's role solely to assisting state and local gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender groups and causes. Among other things, the group will build an extensive field operation to help train activists in cities and states, especially in efforts to fight anti-gay ballot initiatives, which Jean said have plagued the gay movement for 20 years.

The restructuring led to at least three staff layoffs and more than a dozen resignations in the past year. The NGLTF employee union considered, but later backed down from, engaging in a labor action after Jean reduced the health insurance benefits for domestic partners of employees, saying the group could no longer afford to pay 100 percent of partners' premiums.

'Supremely dedicated'

Foreman said that when he takes the helm of the group on May 12, he will spend his first three weeks on the job in the Washington headquarters. He said he expects to spend much of his time over the next several months traveling throughout the country, meeting state and local activists and raising money for NGLTF's work.

"Matt's dedication to social justice issues fits perfectly within the mission of the Task force," Jean said in a statement. "No other organization is doing the work the task force is doing, few are achieving the kinds of results that NGLTF has achieved, and as a long-time fan and soon-to-be former employee of NGLTF, I am excited by Matt's leadership and the many successes I know he will help to achieve."

Many gay activists credit Foreman and ESPA with a strong record, including passage by the state legislature in 2002 of a gay rights bill that had been blocked by Republicans for 31 years. Foreman also headed a successful lobbying campaign for a state hate crimes law that includes protection for gays, helped lobby for passage of a sweeping domestic partners law in New York City, and assisted suburban jurisdictions of Nassau, Suffolk and Westchester counties in passing gay civil rights ordinances.

But some gay activists within the progressive-left faction in New York criticized Foreman for becoming too closely tied to establishment politics. Foreman drew expressions of outrage when he and ESPA endorsed Republican Gov. George Pataki's re-election as part of a perceived deal in which Pataki promised to push through the gay rights bill.

Both Pataki and Foreman denied such a deal was ever made, even though most political observers considered an ESPA endorsement of Pataki as a necessary step for obtaining Pataki's strong backing for the bill. Prior to its approval last year, the New York's Republican-controlled Senate blocked passage of a state gay rights bill for 30 years. Pataki's support for the legislation as a GOP governor was considered instrumental to its passage.

Bill Dobbs, an outspoken activist in New York, criticized Foreman for not speaking out against other "crime and justice" issues during his tenure as head of AVP, including Pataki's reinstitution of the death penalty in New York.

"If NGLTF is a progressive organization, then Matt Foreman's politics are a mismatch," Dobbs said. "He is not a political progressive."

The Foreman file
Age: 48
Education: West Virginia Wesleyan College (1976); New York University School of Law (1982)
Experience: executive director, Empire State Pride Agenda (1997-2003); executive director, New York City Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project (1990-1996); founder, Heritage of Pride; Assistant Commissioner of the West Virginia Department of Corrections; Executive Assistant to the New York City Correction Commissioner
Family: Resides with partner of 13 years, Francisco De Leon, in Manhattan

MORE INFO
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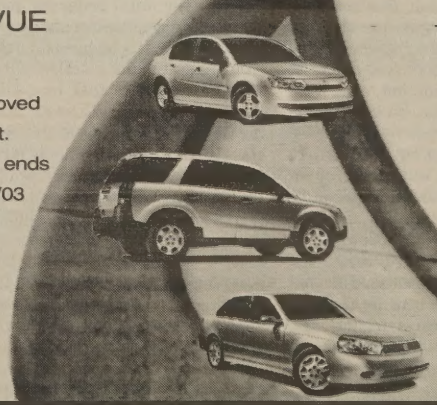

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police beat

Philly district attorney to investigate trans homicide

PHILADELPHIA —Philadelphia District Attorney Lynne Abraham decided April 3 to investigate the killing of Nizah Morris, a transgendered woman bashed on the head in December, the Philadelphia Daily News reported. "If the district attorney can unearth something, we'll be happy with that," Homicide Capt. Thomas Lippo said. Gay activists accuse police of a sloppy investigation, but authorities say they have no clues and no witnesses. Morris, 47, was found lying in the street with a massive head wound on Dec. 22. The medical examiner's office said she was murdered, but police didn't rule it a homicide for weeks, fueling criticism that they were not taking the case seriously because Morris was transgendered. On the night of her attack, Morris collapsed drunk outside a gay bar and refused a ride home in a police car. Passing motorists found her lying in the street minutes later. Police won't release toxicology reports and did not file a report on offering Morris a ride.

Philadelphia District Attorney **Lynne Abraham** opened an investigation into the slaying of a transgendered woman after criticism that police weren't doing enough to find the killer. (Photo by Dan Loh/AP)

Three held over for trial in Calif. trans teen killing

HAYWARD, Calif. (AP) — Three men pleaded innocent to murder April 2 in the killing of transgendered teen Gwen Araujo, and their trials could start nine months to a year from now, said Gloria Allred, attorney for the victim's family. The killing took place Oct. 4 after Araujo was discovered to be biologically male at a party at the home of Jose Antonio Merel, 23. Araujo was beaten to death, and her body was buried in a shallow grave. Merel, along with Jason Michael Cazares and Michael William Magidson, both 22, face charges of murder in a hate crime. A fourth man, Jaron Chase Nabors, 20, pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter in return for testifying against his friends. Madigson was released on bail in February to undergo drug counseling, but was sent back to jail at the end of the preliminary hearing. No action has been taken on a motion by his lawyers to again grant bail.

Lesbian judge in Calif. held for trial in domestic dispute

SANTA MARIA, Calif. (AP) — A lesbian Santa Barbara County judge was ordered April 1 to stand trial on charges of battery, brandishing a gun and drunken driving, which could end her career on the bench if convicted. The trial date will likely be set at an April 18 hearing. Hall, 52, was arrested Dec. 21 after an argument with her domestic partner, Deidra Dykeman, who told officers Hall threatened to shoot one of their dogs. The confrontation came after Dykeman discovered that Hall took some Christmas wrappings that Dykeman purchased for herself. "I never saw her like that before," Dykeman said in a preliminary hearing. Hall brandished a loaded .38-caliber revolver and smashed the telephone before driving off, according to Dykeman. Hall was later arrested for drunken driving with a 0.18 blood-alcohol level, more than twice the legal limit. Using a gun to dissuade a witness and destroying a telephone to block calls to police are felonies.

Partner arrested in gay leader's stabbing death

WILKES-BARRE, Pa. (AP) — A man was arrested and charged with criminal homicide in the death of his lover April 3 after telling police the lover attacked him then fled. Kenneth Stephens, 21, told police he was stabbed by Michael Pierson, a 40-year-old gay activist and health educator, during a Jan. 28 domestic argument. Stephens was hospitalized, and police filed a warrant charging Pierson with assault. Pierson's body was found March 12 in a golf course lake near where the argument allegedly took place. An autopsy showed that Pierson suffered a single, fatal stab wound to the chest. "[Stephens] never indicated that Mr. Pierson had been stabbed or injured in any manner," said Trooper Chuck Sands. Stephens is being held without bail. Pierson's friends said the couple broke up a few days before he disappeared.

Accused gay LAPD deputy chief joined program to boost pension

LOS ANGELES — Two days after gay Los Angeles Police Department Deputy Chief David Kalish was suspended over allegations that he sexually abused male teens in a police-youth program in the '70s, he joined a deferred pension program that boosts his income more than 60 percent, according to the Los Angeles Times. The city program pays each month into an interest-earning account to be spent at retirement. Employees who sign up must retire within five years. "It appears that he qualifies for it," said Capt. Jim Tatreau, director of the Command Officers Assn. "But this is certainly not what the program was designed for." Whatever the outcome of the criminal investigation, which the district attorney is still considering turning over to a grand jury, Kalish will receive the extra payments that began accruing April 1. Six people, including three who contacted authorities after Kalish's suspension became public, allege that Kalish abused them.

From staff and wire reports

national news

Syphilis infections on the rise in South Florida

Sharp increases noted in areas popular as gay vacation spots

By JOE CREA

MIAMI — Syphilis infections among gay men were 43 percent higher in January and February in Fort Lauderdale's Broward County than the same time period last year, according to Florida health officials. Miami-Dade County cases were up 30 percent over the same period.

Howard Sommers, acting director of the sexually transmitted disease division of the Broward County Health Department, said that up to 90 percent of all accounted syphilis cases were reported by men and 85 percent of those men are co-infected with HIV.

"We're talking about a syphilis infection raising viral loads among men who are infected with HIV," Sommers said. "When you have HIV, you don't want to put any additional stress on the immune system."

Sommers said that Broward County has seen a significant increase in syphilis infections during the past three years. In 1998, there were 13 reported cases of syphilis for the entire year. Currently, 11 new cases are reported each month, Sommers said.

The Miami-Dade Health Department's says an advertising campaign targeting gay men about sexually transmitted diseases has helped its syphilis prevention efforts.

"This is a result of high-risk activity and not all gay men engage in this type of behavior," Sommers said. "Since a lot of these cases are being reported by men who are HIV-positive, a lot of them are not as worried about getting something else. This is a group of people who are engaging in high-risk behavior and infecting people who might not traditionally have high-risk partners."

Lorri Jordahl, Miami-Dade's STD program consultant, said that many gay men have suffered from "message fatigue," noting that "condom only" messages fail to have the same impact they once did in the late '80s.

Jordahl also noted that a minority of men infected with syphilis who visit her office simply get their medicine and go back out on the prowl.

"We call them 'frequent fliers,'" Jordahl said. "They come in, get tested, get their antibiotics and go out and do the same exact thing."

Hardnett said that each person who tests positive for syphilis is interviewed by a disease intervention specialist. Those who test positive may opt to provide the specialist with the names and phone numbers of their most recent sexual contacts. Hardnett said these individuals are then free to suggest friends who may have been exposed to syphilis.

"We classify the sexual partners as 'partners' and the friends as 'suspects'," Hardnett said. "As a result, we approach [friends] differently. We contact these individuals and let them know that someone who cares about your health is worried that you might have been exposed to syphilis or HIV and we wanted to offer you an anonymous or confidential test."

Uptick in NYC cases

South Florida isn't the only area that is experiencing a rise in syphilis infections. The New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene announced earlier this year that syphilis infections, which doubled between 2000 (117 cases) and 2001 (282 cases) increased by another 50 percent in 2002, with a preliminary year-end count of 436 new cases.

The vast majority of those cases are among men who have sex with men and who are HIV-positive, New York health officials said.

To tackle the growing problem, Hardnett's team at the Miami-Dade Health Department produced three ads targeting gays in the area. One features a man with syphilis ulcers on his tongue and lower lip with the text, "Got Syphilis!" below the image.

"The 'gross out' factor really got people talking about oral sex," Jordahl said. "People aren't as concerned about getting a disease through oral sex."

Syphilis is a sexually transmitted infection caused by bacteria that land on the body — usually on the penis or anus — during sex with an infected partner. Within 90 days of infection, a red, painless ulcer appears on the site where the infection took place and heals within a few weeks. But at that time, the bacteria enters the body causing fever, joint pain, fatigue, liver problems, enlarged lymph nodes, eye problems and a copper-colored skin rash that appears on palms and soles.

MORE INFO

Broward County Health Dept.
2421-A SW 6th Ave.
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www.browardchd.org

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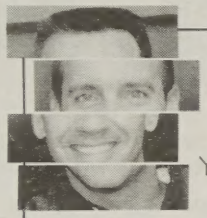

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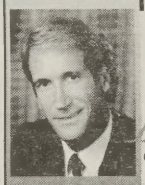

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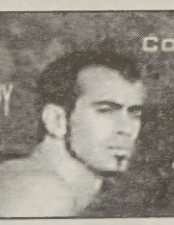

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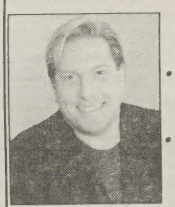

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Mind, Body & Spirit listings

continued on pages 21 & 56

medical report

Christian-themed AIDS brochure pulled from use in Fla.

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — State health officials pulled a Christian-themed AIDS brochure from circulation April 4 after the ACLU of Florida complained that tax money was used for pamphlets with Biblical passages. ACLU Director Howard Simon said the brochures — titled "A Christian Response to AIDS" — may have a worthwhile goal, but contain a message that shouldn't be delivered by state government. "While the state must respond to this public health crisis and find ways to stop the spread of the AIDS virus, the state must base its message on ... medical and scientific information, rather than advocate a particular Christian set of beliefs," Simon wrote. The department's lawyers reviewed the pamphlet and immediately decided to remove it from the agency's list of approved educational materials, according to a letter sent by the agency to county health departments and local health groups. The pamphlets use passages from the Bible to urge compassion toward people with AIDS and the HIV virus. Each bears the logo and name of the Florida Department of Health. The brochure asks: "How would Jesus respond to a person with HIV or AIDS?" and promises that "Jesus is our Hope." The pamphlet has been in circulation for about a decade and is used in several states.

After complaints from **Howard Simon**, director of the ACLU of Florida, the state removed from use a religious AIDS pamphlet that asked how Jesus would respond to a person with the disease. (Photo courtesy ACLU)

Gay health professionals want 'broader perspective' on staph

SAN FRANCISCO — The Gay & Lesbian Medical Association is warning that media reports about a drug-resistant staph infection seen recently in gay men in several cities need to provide a broader perspective, according to Kenneth Haller, the group's president. Methicillin-Resistent Staphylococcus Aureus, or MRSA, is a skin infection resistant to commonly prescribed antibiotics that began surfacing late last year among gay men in San Francisco and Los Angeles. Cases are also reported in Washington, Houston, Atlanta and other cities. The infections manifest themselves as boils and abscesses on various parts of sufferers' bodies, including rectal and groin infections. "We should not think of MRSA as either some type of super-staph infection or as a specifically gay health issue," Haller said. "Where it becomes a problem, particularly for HIV-positive persons, is if the wrong antibiotic is given to treat a staph infection. If the first medicine is ineffective, that could allow the infection to become much deeper and more severe." Staph has been seen in populations other than gay men for years, Haller said, and that the infection's resistance to drugs is not surprising.

Council wants probe into $14 million in lost AIDS money

NEW YORK (AP) — The city's HIV Planning Council voted April 3 to investigate the reasons why $14 million in funds to New York's AIDS programs were cut. The decision came during a meeting that discussed how the city would deal with the loss of the federal money. The city lost the money for AIDS care from the Ryan White Title I funds. The federal Health & Human Services department allots the funds to 51 cities for low-income people with AIDS. New York City's application ranked near the bottom of the list. "If you find problems with the application, let's use that to make sure next year's application is better," said Health Commissioner Thomas Frieden, whose department came under fire for its application. "But my take is that absolutely nothing in the application justifies this cut."

Hundreds expected for four-day conference on bisexuality in Calif.

SAN DIEGO — Four days of workshops and panel discussions are planned for the North American Conference on Bisexuality, set for Aug. 21-24 in San Diego. As part of the conference, the 1st Bisexual Health Summit will also be held, organizers said. More than 500 bisexual authors, researchers, health care professionals and activists are expected to attend the event. "But this conference isn't just for bisexual activist and researchers," said Robyn Ochs, Bisexual Resource Center co-founder and conference presenter. "This conference is for all people who wish to learn more about bisexuality and network and socialize with others who share common experience around their sexuality." For more information, see www.bisexual.org/nacb.

AIDS activists shout down South African health minister

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (AP) — South African AIDS activists interrupted last month's opening of a conference by Health Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, calling her a murderer and demanding her arrest. About 100 members of Treatment Action Campaign shouted down the controversial health minister, waving "wanted" posters and chanting "murderer" and "Manto go to jail," the South African Press Association reported. TAC recently launched a campaign of civil disobedience against what they say is the government's refusal to combat the AIDS pandemic with costly drugs. Government spokesperson Joel Netshitenzhe said the activists' behavior was inappropriate. "We can make greater progress as a nation if we all lend a hand in partnership against AIDS. Our energies should be spent fighting AIDS, not one another," he said.

From staff and wire reports

Mind, Body & Spirit

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Mind, Body & Spirit listings
continued on pages 20 & 56

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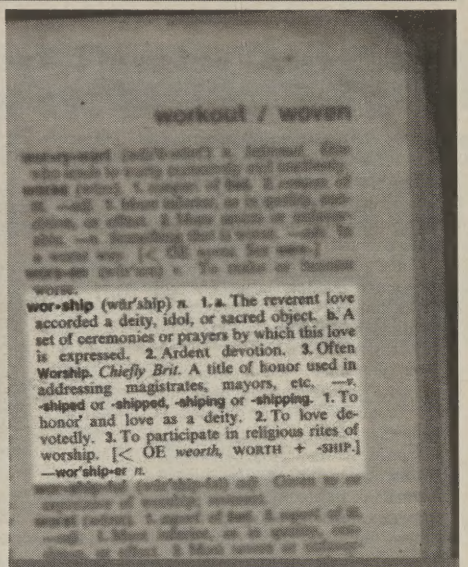
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April 17 † Maundy Thursday
7pm service
April 18 † Good Friday
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April 19 † Children's Easter Party
10:30am - 12:00 noon
April 20 † Easter service
11am service

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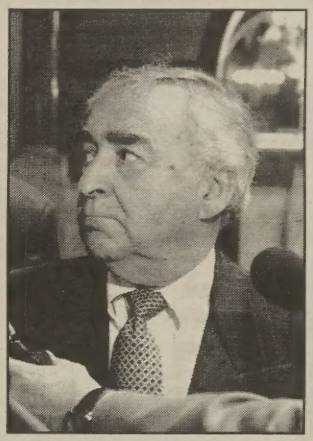
religion news

Catholics rally against gay union legislation in Conn.

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — As the state edges ever closer to becoming the first state to legalize same-sex marriage, about 200 Catholics rallied April 1 to lobby lawmakers against the legislation and for limits on abortion. Two Republican state senate leaders met with the group and promised to back their demands. Senate Minority Leader Louis DeLuca pledged to not compromise on the gay marriage legislation. "A rose by any other name is still a rose," DeLuca said. "This is not a rose. It's a dandelion." Sen. William Aniskovich said backers of traditional marriage must oppose any "incremental drift" in the meaning of marriage. "I see no compromise at all," he said. "The fight here has to return it to a sacrament. We need to step away from compromise and see the big picture." Democratic Rep. Jack Malone said lawmakers probably won't enact same-sex marriage rules this year. Lawmakers told the Catholic activists that severe budget troubles will take most of the General Assembly's time, and that gay marriage was not a priority in any case.



Louis DeLuca, the Republican senate minority leader in Connecticut, told Catholic activists that gay marriage is a 'dandelion not a rose.' (Photo by Bob Child/AP)

Rutgers settles lawsuit over gays in campus religious group

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. — Rutgers University and InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA, a Christian student group, settled a dispute over the university's decision to revoke the group's charter, according to the Chronicle of Higher Education. IVCF/USA sued Rutgers in late December after the university found that the group's requirement that its leaders affirm a statement of religious faith was a violation of the university's nondiscrimination policy. In the settlement, Rutgers allowed the group to take into account the religious beliefs of candidates seeking leadership roles in the group; in return, the group dropped its lawsuit against the university. IVCF/USA agreed to explicitly recognize the right of any student to seek a leadership position in the organization, although the group's members have the right to choose leaders based on their religious beliefs.

Duke Divinity School students want more say in ethics codes

DURHAM, N.C. (AP) — Some students of the Duke Divinity School are object to a newly enacted ethics policy that, among other things, requires students and faculty members to live in chastity. Since chastity traditionally meant being faithful if married and celibate if single, gay students worry that they would violate the code if they have sexual relations since they can't do so under the sanction of marriage. Ethics Professor Amy Laura Hall said chastity could include responsible and faithful sexual relations among gays, though the code does not specify that. Chastity, Hall said, means "conducting one's intimate life in a way that's not demeaning to oneself and to others." The divinity school is affiliated with the United Methodist Church, which does not ordain gay ministers or permit gay union ceremonies. But the school has students from other Protestant denominations with more liberal policies on gays.

Christian groups fight 'culture war' against gay families

LONDON, Ont. — Christian groups across Canada are sending money to finance a battle against a lesbian couple that is petitioning the court for the right of both women to be legally recognized as mothers of a newborn boy. The London Free Press reports that the groups are calling their struggle a "culture war" against the "militant homosexual agenda." Rev. Royal Hamel compares the tactics to a Nazi blitzkrieg. "Clergy need to remember that the only way to defeat moral evil is by teaching moral truth," Hamel wrote on a Christian-advocacy Web site. The groups maintain that a ruling in the women's favor would, in effect, create Canada's first three-parent family.

Anglicans in South Africa want discussion on gay marriage

CAPE TOWN, South Africa — The Anglican Church released a preliminary report on same-sex marriage to stimulate discussion on the issue, Archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane told News24.com. The release follows a court ruling last month that twins born by artificial insemination to a lesbian couple were legitimate, a term traditionally used for children born into a married couple. The report urges the church, which has 10 million members, to set in motion a "pastoral process to help the church engage, at all levels," and that workshops should enable members to "participate in discerning God's word to the Church" on homosexuality and same-sex unions. The African church's leaders remain nearly uniform in their antipathy to gay rights. Njongonkulu said the fundamental teaching of the church was that a marriage consists of a husband and wife. The Anglican Church worldwide has not sanctioned gay unions, but the issue consistently provokes controversy.

From staff and wire reports

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Wednesday, April 16, Tenebrae
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7:00 PM A Preparation Liturgy of the Tenebrae

Triduum Liturgies
Thursday, April 17, Maundy Thursday:
The Vigil of Good Friday
5:30 PM Agape Meal
7:00 PM Foot Washing & Holy Eucharist

Friday, April 18, Good Friday
6:30 PM The Way of the Cross
7:00 PM Solemn Liturgy of Good Friday & Adoration of the Cross

Sunday, April 19, Easter Vigil
6:00 AM Lighting of the New Fire, Holy Baptism & First Eucharist of Easter
7:30 AM Breakfast

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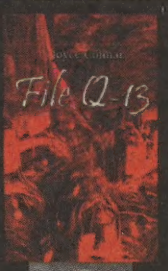

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KSU hosts student 'summit'

Meeting offers opportunity to network among area campuses

By JEN CHRISTENSEN

This month, Kennesaw State University will host one of the first summits for gay student groups in the state.

Set for April 26, the daylong summit will provide organizing workshops, leadership panels and networking opportunities for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered students and faculty from across Georgia.

Confirmed participants include students from Emory University, Georgia State University, the Georgia Institute of Technology and Georgia Perimeter College in Atlanta, as well as the University of Georgia in Athens. Area high school groups are also invited.

"We are very excited about this summit," said Darrett Burr, current president of Kennesaw's Gay Lesbian Straight Alliance. "It's going to be such a great opportunity for student groups like ours to network with people who are interested in the same things ... helping improve life on campus for all gay students."

Darrett Burr, president of the gay-straight alliance at Kennesaw State University, said an upcoming summit hosted by his organization offers 'a great opportunity ... to network' with gay students on other area campuses. (Photo courtesy KSU GLSA)

The majority of schools in the metro area include sexual orientation in their non-discrimination policies and nearly all have active gay student groups. With so many student groups, summit organizers felt it was time that they all meet formally to share their ideas.

Kennesaw's gay group may have a lot to share. Burr, a sophomore majoring in Human Services, said he was encouraged by the university to help rejuvenate the GLSA on campus.

"They told me to go for it, and we went from a group with just one member to about 50 active members in just a short time," Burr said.

In addition to including sexual orientation in the campus non-discrimination policy, Kennesaw State University has encouraged the GLSA to hold information tables at student orientation. And on April 13, the university hosts a speech by James Dale, the gay Scoutmaster who lost his job because he was gay and lost his discrimination case against the Boy Scouts in the U.S. Supreme Court.

But like all of Georgia's public colleges and universities, KSU doesn't offer health insurance benefits for domestic partners. Those benefits are set statewide by the Board of Regents, which has yet to act on a request from UGA supporting the benefits.

Students and faculty at KSU said they also still deal with occasional problems like people who tear down the GLSA's banners.

"The university still is in Cobb County, after all," said Teresa Joyce, KSU's dean of graduate studies and the motivating force behind the summit. "I think Kennesaw's a very nice environment to come out in, but there are still

Please see STUDENT SUMMIT on Page 63

Basketball tourney a 'resounding success'

A diverse group of women — including groundbreaking lesbian politicians Decatur City Commissioner **Kecia Cunningham**, Atlanta City Council President **Cathy Woolard** and state Rep. **Karla Drenner** (D-Avondale Estates) — turned out April 5 for the First Annual Rainbow Classic Basketball Tourney at the Decatur Recreation Center.

Teams representing the Atlanta Lesbian Cancer Initiative, the Atlanta Feminist Women's Chorus, the African-American lesbian group ZAMI and business networking organization Fourth Tuesday competed in the event, which also included music, concessions and face-painting for the children who attended.

ALCI took first place and ZAMI came in second. Organizers pronounced the event a "resounding success" for all participants. "I was absolutely proud to live in metro Atlanta and be a part of this community. And yes, we will definitely do it next year," said Mary Anne Adams, ZAMI executive director.

Proceeds from the event will be split evenly among the four teams. Final tallies were not available at press time, Adams said. (Photos by R.O. Youngblood)

Laura Douglas-Brown

CALENDAR, Page 29 OCCASIONS, Page 28

notes

Patrick Guerriero, executive director of the national gay GOP group Log Cabin Republicans, speaks to the Atlanta Executive Network April 17 about current issues and his group's mission. 6:45 p.m., Sheraton Colony Square Midtown, 188 14th St. www.aen.org

SATURDAY APRIL 12

'ISM' SCHISM: Clark Atlanta University holds a daylong symposium on 'isms' in the black community, including one panel discussion on sexism, genderism and homophobia. Cole Research Center, 223 James P. Brawley Drive SW. 404-931-9567, isms_symposium@yahoo.com

ENCHANTED EVENING: Fourth Tuesday's much-anticipated Spring Fling begins with a social hour at 7 p.m. before a dinner and dance at 8 p.m. at the Atlanta History Center, 130 West Paces Ferry Road NW. $65, www.fourthtuesday.org

MONDAY APRIL 14

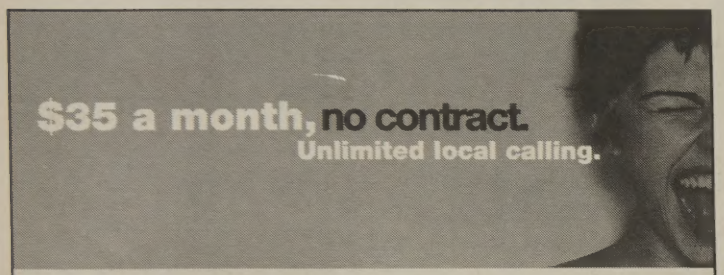
GAY SCOUT: Kennesaw State University welcomes ousted gay Boy Scout leader James Dale for a 7 p.m. lecture in the University Rooms of the KSU Student Center. A reception prior to 'Gay Rights: The Boy Scouts and the U.S. Supreme Court' takes place from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. in the Fireside Lounge, 1000 Chastain Road, 770-423-6768

WEDNESDAY APRIL 16

BODY BEAUTIFUL: AID Atlanta hosts 'Body Image, Self Esteem and the Impact of Lipdystrophy/Lipoatrophy' by Tonya Poteat of Grady Hospital's Infectious Disease Program at 9 a.m. 1438 W. Peachtree St., Suite 100. RSVP requested to chris.parsons@aidatlanta.org

THURSDAY APRIL 17 – SUNDAY APRIL 20

BOWL-A-RAMA: Some 360 gay bowlers from all over the world descend on Atlanta for the 2003 Dixie Invitational Bowling Tournament at Express Lanes, 1936 Piedmont Circle NE, 404-874-5703, www.dixiebowl.org



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404-523-2320

South Dekalb Mall
2801 Candler Rd.
(Mall Parking Lot)
404-241-3038

Jonesboro
6457 Tara Blvd.
(Office Depot Shopping Center)
770-603-2211

Vinings
3220 Cobb Pkwy. S.E.
(1 mile South of Cumberland Mall)
770-859-9440

Gwinnet Station
2180 Pleasant Hill Road
(Kroger Shopping Center)
770-814-2907

Town Center
741 Town Park Lane
(Located on Chastain Road between I-75 and I-575)
770-499-2254

Northlake
4006 LaVista Rd.
(Across from Northlake Mall next to Michaels)
678-937-1980

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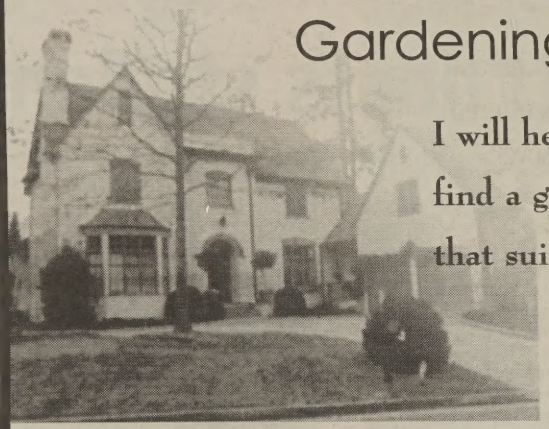

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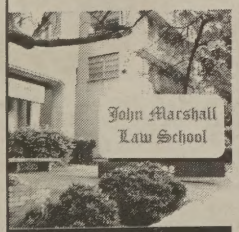

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local news

Gay congregations celebrate Holy Week

Traditional and contemporary services offered for Easter, Passover

By CHRISTOPHER SEELY

Contemporary Christian singer Marsha Stevens got her start during an era that spawned terms like "Jesus freak" and "street Christian" in the late 1960s and '70s. She even opened for evangelists Billy Graham, Pat Robertson and Anita Bryant.

But that was before Stevens realized she was a lesbian.

In her days as an accepted member of the Christian movement, the hymns she wrote made it into evangelical hymnals across the country — only to be ripped out years later when she fell in love with a woman and the people who worshipped with her turned against her.

"People were awful," Stevens said. "People wrote me off. People sent me hate mail. Whole churches ripped out my songs and sent them to me."

She wasn't convinced that being gay would fit into the movement from which she emerged.

"I did a lot of going, 'This is so dumb — I either trust God or I don't. Strike me straight ... you're supposed to love me for who I am,'" she said.

Please see HOLY WEEK on Page 63

Regarded by the Encyclopedia of Contemporary Christian Music as the mother of the genre, lesbian **Marsha Stevens** performs as part of Holy Week at Christ Covenant MCC. (Photo courtesy Marsha Stevens)

MORE INFO

Unity North Atlanta Church
4255 Sandy Plains Road, Marietta
678-819-9100
www.unitynorth.org

Good Friday Service
April 18, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Easter Egg Hunt/Festival
April 19, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Easter Sunday Service
April 20, 9:15 a.m. & 11:15 a.m.

First MCC
1379 Tullie Road, Atlanta
404-325-4143

Palm Sunday, April 13
Breakfast, 8 a.m.
Worship, 11 a.m.

Holy Wednesday, April 16
Taize Worship, 7 p.m.

Maundy Thursday, April 17
Worship, 7 p.m.

Good Friday, April 18
Worship, 7 p.m.

Easter Sunday, April 20
Worship, 11 a.m.

Christ Covenant MCC
109 Hibernia Avenue, Decatur
404-373-2933

Maundy Thursday
April 17, 7 p.m.

Good Friday
April 18, 7 p.m.

Marsha Stevens Concert
April 19, 7 p.m.

Easter Sunday
April 20, Sunrise, 7 a.m.
Easter Celebration Service, 11 a.m.
Easter Brunch, 12:30 p.m.

Virginia-Highland Church
873 Virginia Avenue
404-873-1355

Palm Sunday Service
April 13, 11 a.m.

Maundy Thursday
April 17, 7:30 p.m.

Good Friday
April 18, 7:30 p.m.

Easter Sunday
April 20, 11 a.m.

All Saints' Episcopal Church
634 W. Peachtree St.
404-881-0835

Palm Sunday, April 13
Holy Eucharist, 8 a.m., 9 a.m., 11:15 a.m., 5:30 p.m.

Holy Week Morning Services,
April 14 - 17, 7:30 a.m.

Holy Week Preaching Series, April 14 - 17
12:15 p.m.

Tenebrae
April 14, 7:30 p.m.

Maundy Thursday
April 17, 7:30 p.m.

Good Friday
April 18
Liturgy, 7:30 a.m.
The Three Hours, 12-3 p.m.
Liturgy, 7:30 p.m.

Holy Saturday Liturgy
April 19, 8 a.m.

Eater Sunday
April 20
Holy Eucharist, 6 a.m., 8 a.m., 9 a.m., 11:15 a.m., 5:30 p.m.

Congregation Bet Haverim
Atlanta Friends Meeting House
701 W. Howard Ave., Decatur
404-607-0054

Chocolate Seder
April 13, 9:30 a.m.

First Seder
April 16, time TBA

Second Seder
April 17, time TBA

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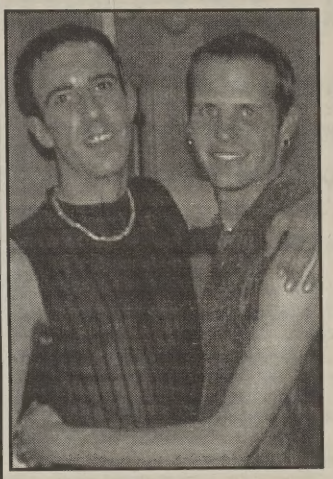
occasions

ANNIVERSARY

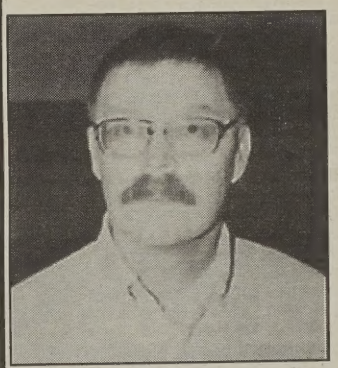


On April 7, **Jerry Kennedy** and **Jack Dourron** will celebrate 2 years together.

'My Jackito — Words could never describe the joy you have brought into my life. Although you were taken from me by forces beyond our control, I now have you back in my arms where you belong. It is my only desire to fill your life with the same joy you have brought to mine.'

'So I ask you, Jack Dourron, to let me be your partner as we travel through life. Will you continue to make me the luckiest man alive and marry me? Love, Jerry'

BIRTHDAYS



Happy birthday to syndicated columnist **Paul Varnell** on April 16.

Happy birthday to Georgia Equality chair-elect and Fayette county convener Tonja Holder on April 17. "The right-wing should be scared of you, girl!"

Southern Voice publishes birthday wishes, anniversaries and other milestones in readers' lives free of charge. E-mail your special occasions to occasions@sovo.com. Call 404-876-1819, ext. 19. Fax: 404-876-2709. Write: Southern Voice/Occasions, 1075 Zonolite Road, Suite 1-D, Atlanta, GA 30306. You must include a telephone number. Occasions are verified by telephone. Occasions may include photographs. Please include a SASE if you want your photograph returned, or send photographs by e-mail.

community calendar

ATHENS

SATURDAY APRIL 12

GLBT TEEN GROUP. 2 pm. Presbyterian student center. 706-546-4611 or stock@negia.net

MONDAY APRIL 14

LAMBDA ALLIANCE. 7 pm. UGA's LGBT student organization. Room 142 of Tate Student Center. 706-583-8297 or www.uga.edu/lambda

ATLANTA

SATURDAY APRIL 12

AID ATLANTA OUTREACH VOLUNTEER TRAINING. 1:30 – 4 pm. Open to all volunteers. Tim Gustavson, 404-870-7742, tim.gustavson@aidatlanta.org

ATLANTA TEAM TENNIS ASSOCIATION OPEN PLAY. 2-6 pm. Social tennis for players at all levels. Piedmont Park. 770-621-2699

FAIRWAY FREE-FOR-ALL. 7:15 am registration, golf tourney to benefit Rainbow Home. $80. Browns Mill Golf Course, 480 Cleveland Ave. 404-402-4402, www.chrishomes.org

FRONT RUNNERS. Meet at 8 am in parking lot behind Piedmont Park tennis courts. 770-621-5007

GEORGIA FIELD HOCKEY ASSOCIATION WOMEN'S LEAGUE. 9 am-noon. All skill levels welcome. Nori, 770-985-4903

GET YOUR LIFE. 12-4 pm. Inter-activity for young black gay and bisexual men. Breakfast and lunch provided. AID Atlanta, 1438 Peachtree St. 404-870-7746, deeperlove@aidatlanta.org

GLBT ROSWELL. 5-7:30 pm. Unitarian Universalist Metro Atlanta North. Chenry8015@aol.com

ISMS AND PHOBIAS. 10 am – 6 pm, panel discussions. Clark Howard University, Cole Research Center, 223 James P. Brawley Dr. SW. isms_symposium@yahoo.com

HOTLANTA BASKETBALL. Men at 11:30 am. Women at 2 pm. New association, all skill levels welcome. Atlbasketball@aol.com

HRC VOLUNTEER PARTY. 2-4 pm, to plan HRC Atlanta Dinner and Silent Auction in May. Volunteer@hrc-atlanta for more info.

LAMBDA POTLUCK. 7 pm. Meet and dine with great guys and sometimes women. RSVP to Bob & Dave for directions. 770-457-5264 or LambdaGroup@msn.com

MIDTOWN ARTISTS MARKET. 10 am-3 pm. Midtown Promenade, 931 Monroe Drive. 770-913-3978

SPRING FLING. 7 pm Single Mingle, 8 pm dinner and dancing. $65, Atlanta History Center, 130 W Paces Ferry Road NW. www.fourthtuesday.org

WILDERNESS NETWORK OF GA. Bicycle camping trip from Nashville, Tenn. to Tupelo, Miss. www.wildnetga.org

YOUTHPRIDE YARD SALE. 8 am – 2 pm. Antiques, washing machine, kitchen supplies, and more. 302 E. Howard Ave. 404-378-7722, www.youthpride.org

ZACCHAEUS SOCIETY. 5 pm. Covered dish. Confidential outreach to straight and gay citizens of Rockdale and Newton counties. 404-522-1444 or zachinfo@mail.com

ZAMI BASKETBALL. 3 pm. African-American hoopers, 18 and older. First Decatur Baptist Church, 308 Clairmont Ave. 404-370-0920, zami@zami.org

SUNDAY APRIL 13

ATLANTA FEMINIST WOMEN'S CHORUS. 3:45 rehearsal. Druid Hills Presbyterian Church. 770-438-5823 or AFWChorus@yahoo.com

ATLANTA RAINBOW TROUT. 11 am. Water polo/swim practice. Georgia Tech Aquatic Center. 404-412-7777, www.atlantarainbowtrout.com

BLACK LESBIAN SUPPORT GROUP. 4-6 pm. Coming out support group. YouthPride Center, 302 E. Howard Ave. Decatur, 404-370-0920

COME OUT DANCING, ATLANTA. 2 pm. Partner dance lessons at UUCA Social Hall, 1911 Cliff Valley Way NE. Swing and Foxtrot, $10 per hour. Contact Shirley Adams for information, 404-876-3950 or comeoutdancing@mindspring.com

GEN-X BEARS. International network of younger bears providing friendship and support to ages 18-35, but open to all. 404-635-9344, gagenx@genxbears.org. www.genxbears.org/atlanta

GET YOUR LIFE. 12-4 pm. Inter-activity for young black gay and bisexual men. Breakfast and lunch provided. AID Atlanta, 1438 Peachtree St. 404-870-7746, deeperlove@aidatlanta.org

PFLAG RIVERDALE/METRO SOUTH. 3:00 pm. Metro South Parents & Friends of Lesbians & Gays at the Southern Regional Medical Center (Education Wing). 404-366-3675 or 404-370-7316. deejaymrrw@aol.com

POTLUCK SOCIALS FOR N GA RESIDENTS. Different location each month. 706-864-3229

SISTAS AGING GRACEFULLY EVERYWHERE. 4 pm. Discussion for black wimmin 40+. YouthPride Center, 302 E. Howard Ave., Decatur. 404-370-0920

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION. Healing touch and polarity therapies. 11:15-1pm. Call to sign up for free sessions. 404-257-1843

MONDAY APRIL 14

HOTLANTA SQUARES. High energy square dancing, no dress code, no pressure, no dance partner and no experience necessary. Meet at First MCC Church of Atlanta, 1379 Tullie Road. 404-432-1809 or hotlantasquares@mindspring.com

JAMES DALE LECTURE. 7 pm, Kennesaw State University Fireside Lounge. "Gay Rights: The Boy Scouts and the US Supreme Court." 1000 Chastain Road. 770-423-6738

LAVENDER LIGHT BOOK CLUB. 7:30-9:30 pm. Borders Snellville, 1929 Scenic Highway. 404-874-8294

TUESDAY APRIL 15

ATLANTA OUTWORLDERS. 7 pm. Interest group for gay science fiction fans meets at Miss Q's on Amsterdam Ave. for "Buffy." 770-451-8947, www.outworlders.org

ATLANTA RAINBOW TROUT. 8:30 pm. Swim practice. Georgia Tech Aquatic Center. 404-412-7777, www.atlantarainbowtrout.com

FRONT RUNNERS RUN/WALK. 6:30 pm. Meet at the CVS shopping center at the northwest corner of Commerce Drive and Ponce De Leon, Decatur. 770-621-5007

HOTLANTA SQUARES. High-energy square dancing, no dress code, no pressure, no dance partner and no experience necessary. Meet at First MCC Church of Atlanta, 1379 Tullie Road. 404-432-1809 or hotlantasquares@mindspring.com

HOTLANTA VOLLEYBALL ASSOCIATION. 7-10 pm. Open play for all levels. 770-621-5062

RAINBOW CENTER MEN'S SUPPORT GROUP. 12:15-1:30 pm. Gay or bisexual men. www.therainbowcenter.org or 404-885-9776

SHOP FOR LIFE. All day 20 percent proceeds of good bought from Rich's-Macy's in Lenox Mall benefit AID Atlanta and Project Open Hand.

WEDNESDAY APRIL 16

ATLANTA LESBIAN CANCER INITIATIVE. 7 pm Bereavement Group. 404-688-2524

BODY IMAGE, SELF-ESTEEM AND THE IMPACT OF LIPODYSTROPHY/LIPOATROPHY. 9-10:15 am. Tonya Poteat, P.A., Grady Infectious Disease Program. RSVP chris.parsons@aidatlanta.org, 404-870-7726

FRONT RUNNERS. 6:30 pm. Meet at parking lot behind Piedmont Park tennis courts. 770-621-5007

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY ALLIANCE. 3:30 pm. 1000 Chastain Road, SS226. www.kennesaw.edu/clubs/glsa/

OUR SONG 7:15– 9:15 pm. Atlanta Gay & Lesbian Chorus. Rehearsal, First Existentialist Congregation Church. 470 Candler Park Drive. 404-222-0443, oursongatlanta@aol.com

PERSONS WITH AIDS (PWA) SUPPORT GROUP. 7:30-9 pm. 725 Lawrenceville Highway. 770-962-8396, ext. 28

RAINBOW CENTER WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP. 7:30-8:30 pm. For lesbians, bisexual, and questioning women. www.therainbowcenter.org or 404-885-9776

RAINBOW HOME TEAS. Continental breakfast, 7:45-8:30 am. Afternoon tea, 5:45-6:30 pm. RSVP by Tuesday, 3 pm. 404-486-9034, x104

SAFE HARBOR. 7:30 pm. Christian fellowship and bible study for gay men and lesbians. 770-717-9971 or 404-622-8561

TEEN GROUP. 6:30-8 pm. Ages 13-18. YouthPride, 302 E. Howard Ave. 404-378-7722

YOUNG ADULT GROUP. 6:30-8 pm. Ages18-24. YouthPride, 302 E. Howard Ave. 404-378-7722

THURSDAY APRIL 17

AIDGWINNETT & POSITIVE PEACHES. 7:30 pm. PWAs & family/friends/partners/volunteers support group. Newton General Hospital, 5126 Hospital Drive, Covington. Ground floor in Cafeteria Conference Room. 770-356-5645

ATLANTA EXECUTIVE NETWORK. 404-724-9008

ATLANTA GAY MEN'S CHORUS. Rehearsals 7 pm. First Metropolitan Community Church, 1379 Tullie Road. 404-320-1030 or www.agmchorus.org

ATLANTA MEN OF ALL COLORS. 7:30 pm. Organizational meeting at Michael's. www.geocities.com/AtlMenofAllColors

ATLANTA RAINBOW TROUT. 8:30 pm. Swim practice. Georgia Tech Aquatic Center. 404-412-7777, www.atlantarainbowtrout.com

ATLANTA WOMEN'S RUGBY. Practice 7-9 pm. Matches on Saturdays, no experience necessary. www.atlantaheatwrfc.com

BOYTALK. 6:30-8 pm. 18-24. YouthPride, 302 E. Howard Ave. 404-378-7722

COME OUT DANCING, ATLANTA. 7 pm. Partner dance lessons at UUCA Social Hall, 1911 Cliff Valley Way NE. Swing and Foxtrot, $10 per hour. Contact Shirley Adams for information, 404-876-3950 or comeoutdancing@mindspring.com

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS. 3E D&D weekly group meeting in downtown Atlanta. Open to all levels of gay and gay-friendly RPG players. ajones@mindspring.com

FEMINISM 101. 7:30 pm. Vanessa Jackson: Women, Money, and Prosperity. 1189 Euclid Ave. 404-524-0304, www.chariscircle.org

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY ALLIANCE. 12:30 pm. 1000 Chastain Road, SS226. www.kennesaw.edu/clubs/glsa/

LAGENDER INC. 6-7:30 pm. Transgender/Transsexual support group in collaboration with Aniz Inc. 223 Mitchell St., Suite 200. 404-767-5644

LATINO GROUP. 6:30-8 pm. Ages 18-24. YouthPride, 302 E. Howard Ave., Decatur. 404-378-7722

LESBIAN READING GROUP. 404-467-4278

WOMYN'S GROUP. 6:30-8 pm. Ages 18-24. YouthPride, 302 E. Howard Ave. 404-378-7722

FRIDAY APRIL 18

THE AGENDA Midnight. Gay Television. People TV Cable Channel 24. www.herounit.com

ALL WOMEN'S OPEN MIC NIGHT. 8 pm. Charis Books, 1189 Euclid Ave. 404-524-0304

ATLANTA FREEDOM MARCHING BAND. 7 pm. First Metropolitan Community Church, 1379 Tullie Way. 404-622-0666

ATLANTA RAINBOW TROUT. 7:30 pm. Water polo/swim practice. Georgia Tech Aquatic Center. 404-412-7777, www.atlantarainbowtrout.com

HIV TESTS. 4 pm – midnight. Oral tests administered by AID Atlanta. 404-870-7763, www.aidatlanta.org

HOTLANTA VOLLEYBALL ASSOCIATION. Evenings. Open play for all levels. 770-621-5062

To add a listing, e-mail **calendar@sovo.com,** call 404-876-1819, ext. 34, or fax to 404-876-2709, attn: Christopher Seely. Entries should be submitted at least 14 days in advance

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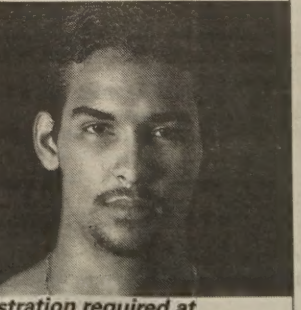

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TO SUBMIT A LETTER OR COMMENTARY: Letters should be fewer than 400 words; commentaries should be fewer than 750 words. Submissions may be edited for content and length, and must include a name, address and phone number for verification. Send submissions by by fax to 404-876-2709 or by regular mail to the Southern Voice office, attn: Letters/Commentary.

ADDRESS: 1075 Zonolite Road, Suite 1-D Atlanta, GA 30306
PHONE: 404-876-1819
FAX: 404-876-2709
E-MAIL: editor@sovo.com
INTERNET: www.sovo.com
PUBLISHER: Window Media LLC

A Window Media Publication

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guest editorial

A new war, a new me

Eleven years ago, when bombs fell on Baghdad, I was singing the national anthem in support. This time around, coming out has changed my view.

By MILES CHRISTIAN DANIELS

I was on my way home from 7-Eleven when a song was interrupted with news that America was bombing Iraq. A nervous reporter gave play-by-play commentary. Bombs and bullets exploded in the background.

I had just turned 14 and remember the sense of pride I felt that night. In somewhat silly fashion, I joined a few of my friends in placing our right hands over our hearts and singing together, "Oh, say can you see by the dawn's early light what so proudly we hailed?"

I was still in the closet in 1991. And I would stay that way for nine more years, both in terms of my sexual orientation and the way I thought things were supposed to be.

But a few details from Operation Desert Storm are still fresh. Peter Arnett and Bernard Shaw became household names. That ghostly green night-vision camera, which brought the bombing into our living rooms, still occasionally emerges in my dreams. And I fondly remember Mom hanging the American flag on our front porch post and tying a yellow ribbon around the rusted anchor in our front yard.

That war lasted less than two months, and Bush Sr. declared victory. Years later I would learn we didn't even come close to winning, and that hopeful Iraqi citizens, who had welcomed our troops with song and dance, were later slaughtered as they tried to finish what we had started. I also learned that all we did to help was toss stale bread from a moving aircraft.

THOUGH WANCHESE, OUR SMALL fishing village in coastal North Carolina, had sent no troops, the community rallied behind George Bush Sr., much like it's doing today with his son. And I stood behind them — not only on the issue of war, but on other moral issues.

I believed abortion was murder, with no exceptions. I believed that gays went to Hell, even though I battled those "demons" myself. I believed Bush Sr. was seated next to the Father's right hand and that listening to liberals would poison my thoughts and hinder my walk with God.

> I guess, in a way, being gay has been good for me. And being gay and from Wanchese even better. Though I'm still loved by many there, even more consider me a depraved sinner and an embarrassment.

Even in high school and early college, I held onto my beliefs. I wrote a newspaper column for the Virginian-Pilot in Norfolk about how wonderful Newt Gingrich's "Contract with America" would one day be for my generation.

I became a licensed minister in my denomination, and served for a year-and-a-half as a full-time youth minister. Life was on-track and Wanchesers, as they're known, couldn't have been more proud.

Until I came out.

AT FIRST, I WONDERED IF MY MORAL metamorphism was a sort of inner revolt — a way of coping with the fact I was now deemed a sinner — an immoral enemy — in the eyes of those I had loved and grown up with. I started writing newspaper columns about gay issues and accepting and loving all people regardless of their differences. The beliefs I once held so dear had seemingly deteriorated.

A few nights before our current president announced our invasion of Iraq, I stood in downtown Wilmington, N.C., holding a lit candle poked through a paper cup holder. Crowded around were a couple hundred people who — like me — did not think we were doing the right thing.

There were Catholics from the downtown parish, activists from the Green and Democratic parties, a handful of local college professors and students, and a healthy representation of gay men and lesbians.

We silently prayed for peace and then we went home.

Though I tried to conjure up the emotions I had felt during the first Persian Gulf War, they just weren't there. In fact, at that moment, I would have been lucky to stumble through that first line of the "Star Spangled Banner."

And, in addition to my prayer for our brave troops, I added a few others to the list, like those Iraqis whose lives would be lost in the line of erroneous bombs and bullets — those civilians who had asked for none of this.

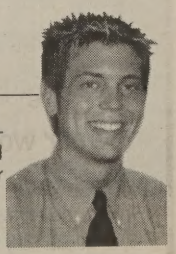
I even offered a prayer for Saddam Hussein. After all, I was taught that Christ came for the most grave of sinners.

While standing silently at that vigil, I also thought about how my life has changed in these brief years since America's first war in Iraq. How only a few years ago, I would have been on the other side of the street waving our flag, holding high my sign proclaiming Hussein a devil, and shouting at those who were not being patriotic.

I guess, in a way, being gay has been good for me. And being gay and from Wanchese even better. Though I'm still loved by many there, even more consider me a depraved sinner and an embarrassment.

So, I've had to learn the hard way what it's like to be thrust on the other side of enemy lines. And I've felt the pain of those who are hated, spit upon and — for some — even murdered for simply being who they are.

Miles Christian Daniels is a freelance writer and documentary filmmaker in Wilmington, N.C. He can be reached at mcd5024@uncwil.edu.



letters

Gay media ignores Iraq, our veterans

To the Editor:

During the war in Iraq, news agencies have been scrambling to do their part on behalf of the "war effort." The American public, including gay viewers, have been watching with their remote control glued to their thumbs, catching every moment of high tech visuals.

Why do I not see the gay media represented in this picture? Do you not have any seasoned personnel on your payroll with military experience to cover the war from the frontlines the way almost every heterosexual new agency seems to have?

You should be covering stories like:

• Is unit cohesion this very second being jeopardized by having personnel from the United Kingdom — who are allowed to serve their own country as openly gay and lesbian members of their military — serving alongside deeply closeted gay and lesbian U.S. personnel?

• What will happen to these veterans if they return with unique types of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, which their very own Veterans Administration refuses to acknowledge, let alone treat, while providing treatment for heterosexual personnel?

• What's it like to be at war and not be in touch with those you love, or to be able to confide in others how badly you miss your same-sex partner who is currently back home, also with no visible means of support like the military wives' clubs located on every military installation?

Once these troops do eventually come home, and for whatever reason leave the miltary, hopefully the gay media will still honor and acknowledge them, instead of the way the gay media currently overlooks existing gay veterans.

It's fashionably and politically correct for the gay corporate/media world to stand up and yell from the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" soapbox, but when it's time to walk the walk, or even extend a simple thank-you when its rightfully due, they've conveniently moved on to other issues.

WILLIAM G. KIBLER
Arlington, Va.

NEWS ITEM:
AWOL MARINE ANNOUNCES CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR STATUS; SAYS HE NEVER MEANT TO FIGHT ...AND BESIDES, HE'S GAY.
LATER DUDES! HAVE A NICE WAR~
OTHER GAY SERVICEMEN
E-mail plerberg@aol.com
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Editor's note: The letter writer is co-founder of the Order of Enslin Veterans, www.gayveterans.org.

Gay seniors need their own space

To the Editor:

Re: "Gay and Gray: Growing movement identifies challenges, opportunities specific to gay seniors" (SoVo Living, March 21):

As a gay baby-boomer, and a managing partner of Shaman Development Group, LLC, a Fort Lauderdale, Fla.-based developer of independent multifamily and congregate care housing for LGBT seniors, I applaud Mike Fleming's cover story on the systemic challenges facing our elders, and the emerging market for affinity senior housing.

Gay men and lesbians live in 99.3 percent of all counties in the United States; they are spontaneously building out supportive neighborhoods, whether groups of friends lease or buy contiguous, detached housing units, or cluster manufactured homes, or mobile homes. The growth of these communities within communities is not self-segregating or discriminatory, but an organic reshaping of social environments. It's a collectivism of knocking down common fences.

But RV parks, clusters, and collective single-family homes can only put off the likelihood that one or both same-sex partners in an unmarried partner household who are 55 years and older will require some intensive supportive care services or assistance with activities of daily living like dressing, grooming, bathing, and monitoring of medication and nutrition.

Then, same-sex partners in traditional facilities may not be permitted to share a double-occupancy unit; they may not be able to speak freely about loved ones, or their past; they may not be able to read gay literature, magazines and newspapers like Southern Voice openly; they may even be refused some types of personal care services.

Anecdotally, we know that gay and lesbian elderly in such unsupportive environments cope with discrimination by concealing their sexual identity, or re-closeting, because there is no other option.

Thanks to the gay and lesbian householders who self-identified as same-sex partners in the 2000 U.S. Census, the diversity of living arrangements in America is clearer. More than 1.75 million gay men and lesbians are 65 and older now. These seniors are a vulnerable and at-risk population due to system barriers in health care delivery, barriers to care, especially long term care, and risks to personal safety.

As an advocate for senior housing and long-term care delivery for gays and lesbians, I am sympathetic to the reasoning of LGBT activists who have worked for inclusiveness and gay rights, but the practical reality is that non-discrimination housing laws, and rote sensitivity training for caregivers, will not protect gay and lesbian seniors with cognitive or functional disabilities from bias in long-term health care delivery.

Going forward, the preparedness of individuals and domestic partners for the contingency of long term care, and the coordination of policymakers, private developers and health care practitioners is still needed to insure that gay seniors have the option of a safe and supportive place to go when we grow old.

JOHN DELEO
Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

'DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR,' PAGE 68

THE Q

Questions about what's going on in **your** world

Interviews and photos by Christopher Seely

Does being gay affect the way you approach religion or spirituality?

'I grew up going to church for most of my childhood, but I don't belong to any organized religion now. I've always approached religion as a touchy matter, because for a lot of people, it is their way of life. Unless I know someone well, I usually keep my own personal religious views to myself. But as I've gotten older, I've always been tolerant of other people's beliefs even if I don't understand them.'

Kensey Cater, 29, Inman Park

'I don't really go to church, but I consider myself spiritual. And pretty recently, I've been more interested with Buddhism. I've been to some of the centers that are located in town. There's a Zen Buddhist center an also a Tibetan Buddhist center. So I'm reading a lot about that. I meditate pretty regularly. I don't consider myself Christian or any monotheistic religion like that.'

Chris Conseil, 34, Midtown

'I'm religious. I just feel like God created us all the same, so if we are gay, he loves us for who we are. I approach religion that way. And I just feel that you just go and you pray, and you ask God to take care of you and watch over you.'

Fred Brockington (right), 31, Doraville with **Kavin Clark**

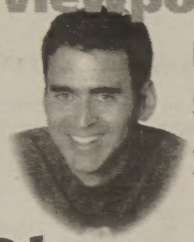
"I'm a Catholic, and for a long time, I didn't go back to my church because I don't agree with a lot of their views. But I've come to start going back, because some of the Catholic churches are more tolerant of our lifestyles now and more accepting to have us in the church again, which makes it a lot better. ... But there's a lot of churches and religions that I don't agree with. I don't appreciate their behavior, because the way I see it they are preaching hate.'

Darlene Warren, 49, Ormewood Park

'I'm not necessarily so sure that my attitude has changed because I am a lesbian. But my attitude definitely has changed because I am a recovering alcoholic, and I am more tolerant of other people's attitudes toward religion. My own attitude has changed because of that aspect, more so than just the being-a-lesbian aspect.'

Skip Marklein, 53, Ormewood Park

viewpoint MICHAEL ALVEAR



Laws should protect rights, not sensibilities. So **don't hate me** if I call you a 'he' when you're a 'she' who used to be a 'he.'

She said, he said

THERE'S SOMETHING A LITTLE annoying about transgendered people insisting that they be called whatever sex they want to be called. And no one redlines the annoying meter more than a certain someone who just wrote a book.

If you think drag queens give you a gender-bending, hocus-pocus, out-of-focus look at she-male chic, you haven't met Patty. Or rather Pat. I mean, Patrick.

Patrick Califia used to be a woman. The kind of woman that liked other women. But now she's a man. The kind that likes other men. It just doesn't get any weirder than that.

Actually, it does. See, Califia has a son, Blake, and shares custody of the child with his ex-girlfriend, Matt, who also used to be a woman, but now he's a man. He stopped taking male hormones so he could give birth. They have no plans to write, "Heather Has Two Daddies That Used To Be Mommies."

Instead, Califia wrote "Speaking Sex to Power, The Politics of Queer Sex"(Cleis Press, 2003). Like his life, it's about as confusing as hiring Ray Charles to redecorate your DNA.

Califia has, without question, a lot to say about gender identity that is worth hearing. For instance, his contention that "socially conditioned behaviors that signal gender are even more crucial than physical traits." In other words, the way a woman is conditioned to dress, walk and behave is often seen by society as a better indicator of her femaleness than her sex chromosomes, secondary sex characteristics and genitalia.

BUT AS ELUCIDATING AS SUCH COMmentary is, there's something a little annoying about Califia's demand to be called whatever he feels like being called, regardless of his anatomy. Like so many transgendered people, Califia is like a bush resenting the grass for not calling it a tree. Well, if you've got bush and no trunk, are you really a tree?

Before all the MTF (male-to-female) transgendered people flick their compact mirrors shut and take up their pitchforks (with matching handbags, of course), I'd like to point out that there's a reality that exists outside of ourselves.

If you wear brown and insist that I call it red because you say so, then you're asking me to skew an objective reality to your liking. Enrolling people into an illusion unsupported by facts seems manipulative to me.

A San Francisco law went over the line when it actually outlawed the act of addressing someone by a gender pronoun they did not prefer. The ordinance actually considered it a form of harassment to call a "he" a "he" instead of a "she" if "he" thinks he's a "she." And no, I will not re-type that; it's too confusing.

Like many others, I consider myself a pig. I wonder if San Francisco thinks it's a form of harassment for my boss to keep calling me a man when I've stated that it does not apply to my current species identity?

It's an admirable thing for San Francisco to pass laws protecting transgendered and transsexual people from discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodation. Amending the administrative and police code to say that people cannot be discriminated against for any reason, including gender identity, is a sign that we're growing into the promise of equality.

But the attempt to conscript thought, to draft perceptions to serve the cause of a dubious militia, to try resisters as traitors is a bit much. Having a city government force people to say "woman" to a person with male genitalia, or "man" to a person with female genitalia, seems almost Orwellian.

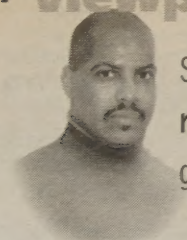
THE TRANSGENDERED AND TRANSSEXual should not be called by the gender they identify as a matter of law but as a matter of respect. Personally, I call transgendered folks whatever gender they want. I don't do it because I necessarily agree with them but as a way of honoring that which they've chosen.

I know what it's like to be treated unfairly for not fitting society's preconceptions of what I should be or how I should act. But laws should protect my rights, not my sensibilities.

So for all the Pattys, Pats and Patricks out there, you go boys/girls/TBA. Just don't back over us with your whoop-ass mobile because we didn't get your pronoun right.

Michael Alvear lives in Atlanta with his lesbian Labrador and girlie-boy Vizsla, and can be reached at **michaelalvear@attbi.com**.

viewpoint REV. JIM WEBB



Support for sodomy laws is built on a platform of **religious fraud**, taken out of context to repress gays and support a notion of public morality.

Sins of Sodom revisited again

TEXAS' BAN ON GAY SEX SHOULD BE overturned because it violates the constitutional right to privacy. I hope it will be overturned because it deprives Texans of equal protection under the law — the law applies only to gays. The Texas law against "homosexual conduct" is based on religious teachings, so it also constitutes a violation of the separation between church and state.

Conservative groups support the law because gays are not so popular among the religious right. But their attack of private acts on the basis of "public morality" is built on a platform of religious fraud.

Sodomy laws are based on Biblical teachings taken out of context, misunderstood and misinterpreted by time, translation and design. Most of us are woefully ignorant of its teachings, except for a few "just-so" stories from Sunday School, and the Hollywood Biblical epics.

In this case, our ignorance is used against us. The Biblical misunderstandings created sodomy laws that are used as a weapon against us. They are selectively enforced to ruin lives and terrorize.

THE SIN OF SODOMITES WAS NOT "the wickedness of homosexuality" as those on the religious right would have you believe — it was a lack of hospitality and their worship of pagan idols.

Sodom was a tiny fortress in the barren wasteland of the Dead Sea, according to biblical scholar Dr. Rembert Truluck. The only strangers that the people of Sodom ever came into contact with were enemies bent on destroying them, or on taking over valuable trade routes.

When word spread through this small enclave that Lot had visitors, Sodom's inhabitants naturally became curious and wanted "to know" them. It is illogical that they wanted "to know them in the Biblical sense," but simply that their fear of strangers fueled their curiosity.

As the crowd became larger, more fearful and more unruly, Lot sent out his daughters. If the male inhabitants of Sodom had been gay, it is illogical that Lot would have appeased them by sending out his daughters. When God destroyed this city, we believed that God did so as a result of homosexuality.

But this biblical passage's mistranslation of the phrase "to know" contributed to a religious, cultural, and legal bias against homosexuals. The phrase "to know" is used 943 times in the Bible, according to Truluck, and is only interpreted to mean "to have sexual relations with" twice. In both places where it is used in this way, the traditional meaning of "to know" makes more sense.

Other biblical passages that reference Sodom and Gomorrah actually refute the premise that God destroyed these cities due to homosexuality. For example, Ezekiel 16: 48–50 clearly indicates that God destroyed Sodom due to its inhabitants' lack of hospitality. Deuteronomy 29: 21-28 adds idolatry to the list of "sins" that caused this city to be destroyed. Neither passage mentions homosexuality.

THE CONCEPT OF SODOMY DIDN'T EVEN really exist until the 11th century, when Christian reformer and hermit Peter Damian coined the term to categorize an abstract set of homoerotic acts, elevating them to the level preoccupying sin, according to Mark D. Jordan in his book "The Invention of Sodomy in Christian Theology."

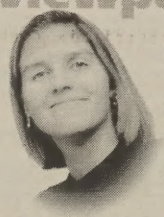
This categorization was based on the same misinterpretations of Sodom and Gomorrah, and fueled by the early church fathers' continued discomfort with human sexuality, which had been evolving for centuries. In this example, the truth became distorted not only because of translation differences — translating Aramaic speech into Greek writings — but also when the early church fathers' discomfort with sexuality and pleasure influenced the interpretation of the ancient teachings.

This distortion has been the basis of religious intolerance, social oppression and legalized victimization of gays through sodomy laws that are still enforced today. Sodomy laws not only violate our right to privacy and equal protection under the law, the laws also violate the separation and church and state when it is held up to the scrutiny of the truth.

This is a case where the truth can literally set us free.

Rev. **Jim Webb** is an ordained interfaith minister and author living in Washington, and can be reached at **revjimwebb@aol.com**.

viewpoint JENNIFER VANASCO



'King & King' is a story about queens, written for children who must learn that **gay families exist** and are about love.

Breaking the family bubble

"KING & KING," A CHILDREN'S BOOK by Dutch authors Linda de Haan and Stern Nijland, begins ordinarily enough. A grouchy queen wants her lazy son to get married, so she decrees that he must find a princess by the end of the summer.

"Very well, Mother," he says. "I must say, though, I've never cared much for princesses."

The prince's young attendant gives a sly wink.

Even so, princesses trot in from every corner of the globe for his inspection. From Texas. From Greenland. From Mumbai. Yet the prince is bored, unhappy. No young lady seems just right.

Then Princess Madeline enters. The young prince perks up. He has found love.

But it is not with the princess. It is with her brother, Prince Lee. Little hearts flow between them on the page. There is handholding, a kiss and a marriage — and of course a happily ever after.

Gay and lesbian couples with young children are already familiar with the lovely "King & King," which debuted a year ago this month. But Chicago Tribune columnist Dawn Turner Trice was appalled.

PRICE LEARNED ABOUT THE BOOK from "concerned parents" at the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools, a private school founded by philosopher John Dewey. Every year, Lab Schools' students think critically about children's books, judging their merits and awarding the Zena Sutherland Award to their favorites. They read books chosen by their librarians and narrow them down to five multicultural, multiracial finalists that represent both genders.

But this year, Trice says in her column, one of the finalists — "King & King" — "has upset some parents who felt that they should have been notified that their parents were reading a book that deals with homosexuality."

Though Trice calls the book "well-conceived," she compares it with other "sexual material" like song lyrics and suggestive clothing. She wouldn't show the book to her own second grader just yet. "When it's time to talk about such things, I may pull the book out," she says. "But I would like to have that choice."

What Trice is forgetting, of course, is that "King & King" is no more about sex than is any of a hundred other fairy tales, from Disney's beloved "Cinderella" and "Snow White" to "The Little Mermaid." "King & King" is about the social rituals and inner attractions of love and partnership.

Even if it were about sex, she is ignoring that no parent is able to choose the timeline for their children's curiosity. No families live in a bubble. Children may ask about sex at the age of 3, when they see a dog humping another dog, or when another child mentions something about it on the playground at 8. Or they might never ask.

When is a parent ever truly ready for their children to grow up?

But most importantly, Trice is forgetting one crucial fact: Not only will some children at Lab grow up to be gay themselves, but some children who attend Lab have parents who are lesbian or gay. It is likely Trice's child also knows children who come from gay families.

AS RESULTS CONTINUE TO COME IN from the 2000 Census, we learned one-third of lesbian couples and one-fifth of male couples are living with children — about 2.3 million total. In conservative states, as much as 40 percent of lesbian couples are raising children.

In fact, according to the Washington Post, "43 percent of unmarried couples living together [including both gay and straight couples] are raising children, nearly matching the 46 percent figure for the nation's married couples. And the trend is climbing for unmarried couples, while it is becoming less and less common for married couples to have children living with them."

The number of children with gay and lesbian parents is rising as more gay men and lesbians take the mother (and father) road; and as more and more children of gay parents spread through the school system, straight parents will need to face the reality that their child's best friend may well have two mommies or two daddies.

That means that Dawn Turner Trice and other parents like her need to wake up and smell the lavender. Gay families exist. They are everywhere. And yes, just like all families, they are about love.

Jennifer Vanasco is Chicago-based syndicated columnist and can be reached at vanasco@chicagofreepress.com.

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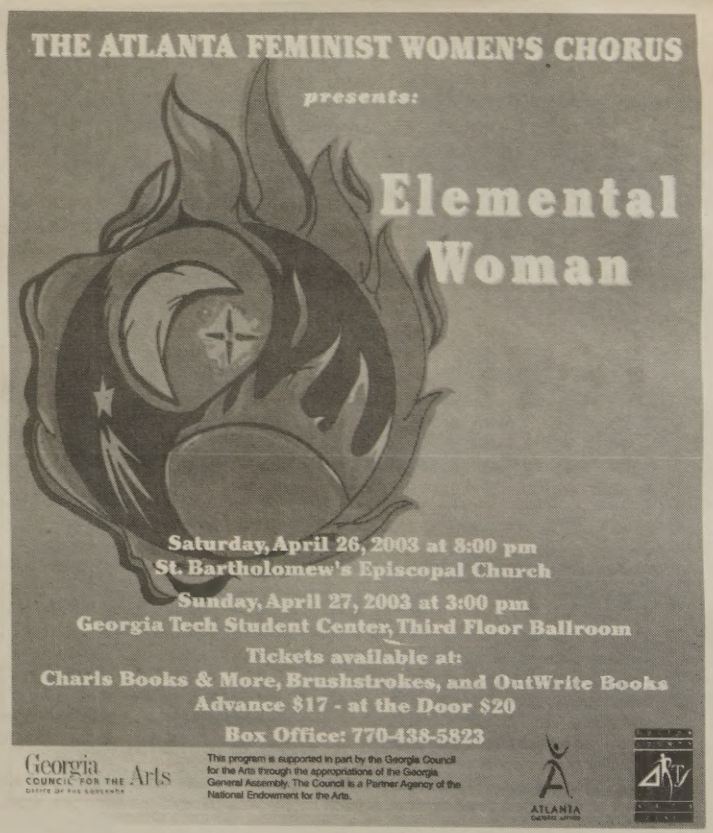
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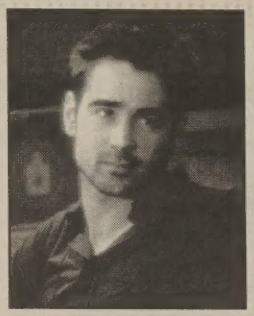


"Sexual preference? Jesus, no, it means nothing to me. [One of my mentors] is as gay as Christmas, and so's my brother. I've been around gay guys since I was, oh, 16. They're just good pals. From Day One we got on, made jokes, and I thought nothing of it."

*Irish actor **Colin Farrell** (Washington Post, April 9)*

"How do I handle a gay proposition? 'Not interested, thanks.' You know, it's amazing the changes in people. ... These same people who would've freaked a few years ago — well, they're not on their knees [bawdy slang], don't get me wrong — but they know that a good person is a good person."

Farrell, on changes in attitudes toward homosexuality (Washington Post, April 9)

"I never thought I'd be sitting around talking about oral sex in front of my mother. That just got to me."

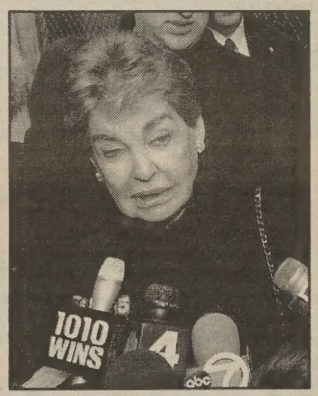
Gay Congressman Barney Frank (D-Mass.), whispering to Congresswoman Maxine Waters (D-Calif.) during testimony in the Clinton impeachment hearings, at which Frank's 86-year-old mother, Elsie, was present; all captured in the newly released documentary "Let's Get Frank" (Washington Post, March 27)

"[San Francisco] awarded a man who had a sex change as its Woman of the Year. When 'he' accepted the award, 'he' said there was a part of 'him' that didn't want to accept it — but that's gone now."

"Tonight Show" host Jay Leno, on the male-to-female transsexual honored by gay California Assemblyman Mark Leno (D-S.F.); Leno's monologue prompted protests from transgender rights activists (NBC's "Tonight Show," March 31)

"World's highest-paid female impersonator. ... [She] sports the face of Jimmy Cagney on the body of Mayor McCheese and lugs around the personality of George Wallace. The only good thing about **Leona Helmsley** is she's so mean, stupid and ugly that you honestly can't even envy her riches."

Naming Leona Helmsley, one of the "50 Most Loathsome New Yorkers" (New York Press, March 25)

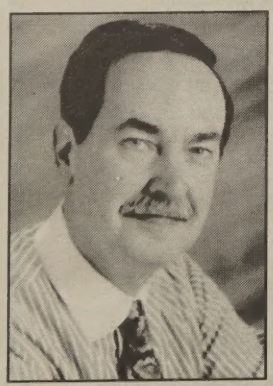


"Homosexuals can and do serve honorably in the Marine Corps. Homosexuals can and do make some of the best Marines. Homosexuals are capable of military service and can and do perform as well as anyone else in the military. We hesitate to discharge Marines solely based on a statement they make about their sexual orientation."

A private memo written by Marine Corps Captain Darrell Allen, of the Twenty-Nine Palms Marine Corps base in California, subsequently leaked to the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network

"While people were requesting we get involved, it was not a role I felt our station should take. We have a very wide audience, and a lot of our listeners are people who have children. People see our DJs as role models in some ways."

Doug Gillen, general manager of KISS 105.3 FM, the most popular radio station on the University of Florida campus, on why the station declined to participate in a college Pride Fest, prompting boycotts against the station from campus student groups (365gay.com, March 31)



"[The oral argument in Lawrence vs. Texas] proved to be a mismatch of advocates to a degree rarely seen at the court."

Longtime correspondent Linda Greenhouse, describing the quality of presentations by gay Washington attorney Paul Smith and Harris County, Tex., District Attorney Charles A. Rosenthal before the U.S. Supreme Court on March 26 in the Texas sodomy case (New York Times, March 27)

"Once sodomy is made legal, what's next? How about polygamy? As we have been reminded in the case of Utah's Elizabeth Smart and her abduction by a practicing polygamist, there are people who believe they have a right to that sexual and relational preference."

*Conservative syndicated columnist **Cal Thomas**, on the Texas sodomy case (Tribune Media Services, March 28)*

action! alert

Leno, NBC under fire

Trans activists up in arms over 'Tonight Show' joke

By MIKE FLEMING

ON THE HEELS OF CRITICISM FOR hiring anti-gay talk show host Michael Savage on its cable network, NBC is under fire from transgender activists upset over a March 31 joke made by Jay Leno on "The Tonight Show."

"The California Assembly awarded a man who had a sex change as it's Woman of the Year," Leno said during his monologue. "When he accepted the award, he said there was a part of him that didn't want to accept it — but that's gone now."

The joke drew immediate rebuke from the National Transgender Advocacy Coalition and its board chair Vanessa Edwards Foster, who also criticized Leno for use of the word "he" in describing California transgender activist Theresa Sparks.

"Jay Leno's remarks took what was a historic recognition for an accomplished transgender community leader and summarily diminished them with insensitive humor," Foster said. "Destroying what little positive impact our community makes, simply for the purpose of gratuitous laughter, serves to objectify transgenders and crushes individuals' hope."

Objectifying transgendered people detaches them from the rest of society, and violence against them is the end effect, she said.

"The cause begins when one is allowed to detach humanity from transgenders and other minority groups," Foster said. "NBC with their choice of programming, and Jay Leno's choice of seemingly harmless humor, implicitly perpetuate this lack of any human quality allowed transgenders."

FOSTER DREW A DIRECT CORrelation between NBC's acceptance of the joke and the recent firestorm over MSNBC's "Savage Nation" and its host Michael Savage, who has made anti-gay statements.

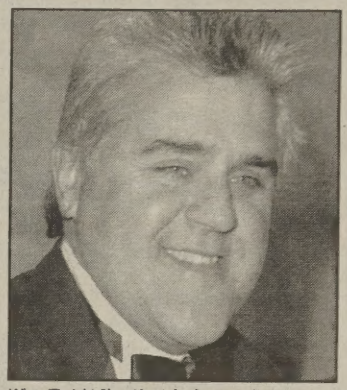
"Coupled with the bombastic blasts from the Michael Savage show on MSNBC, it is easy to denote a trend of dehumanization being broadcast to the nation from this network," Foster said.

The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, a national gay media watchdog group, spearheaded a letter writing campaign to advertisers on Savage's show. All of the signed advertisers dropped their sponsorship as a result.

Negotiations faltered between GLAAD and MSNBC when officials couldn't agree on conditions for a meeting to discuss the show.

"Michael Savage's show was pre-empted by war coverage after the advertisers pulled, and we have no word whether it's coming back or not," said Cathy Renna, news media director for GLAAD.

MSNBC spokesperson Jeremy Gaines said the network is open to talks with GLAAD, but he would not speculate on the future of "Savage Nation."



When 'Tonight Show' host **Jay Leno** cracked about a California transgendered leader in his March 31 monologue, activists saw red. (Photo by Steve Granitz/wireimage.com)

LENO GARNERED EVEN MORE ATTENtion from gay activists last month when his talk show welcomed Russian musical duo T.A.T.U., which has draw attention for a possible lesbian off-stage relationship between its singers Lena Katina and Julia Volkova.

On "The Tonight Show," the pair spontaneously locked lips and groped each other as part of their act.

NBC producers cut away from the action.

The T.A.T.U. appearance attracted two distinct forms of criticism from gays. One faction decried the decision to cut away as proof of the network's discomfort with gay affection. The other was upset that the pair would be included on the show at all, contending that T.A.T.U. lends to the objectification of women — particularly lesbians — by pretending to be gay in an effort to draw heterosexual male fans.

"There's nothing positive for women or gays here," stated an anonymous complaint posted to the NBC Web site.

An NBC spokesperson said the network has no comment.

ACTION! INFO

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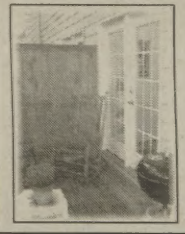

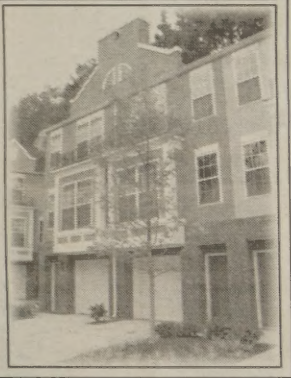

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CHICK FLICKS: Set of lesbian films at local screening includes shorts from pretty good to uproarious. **Page 40**

FUNKY DIVAS: Floetry's **Natalie Stewart** and **Marsha Ambrosius** tour with soulful spoken words set to music. **Page 43**

Spiritual, psychological renewal leads nature lovers to hit the trail this season

The great outdoors

By MIKE FLEMING

THERE ARE NEARLY AS many "types" of gays as there are gay people. Social and support organizations abound for gays of every ilk based on a wide variety of interests and demographic factors.

And that includes gays who love getting together for "back to basics" outdoor activities that not only engender camaraderie, but for many, an overt or indirect renewal of their personal spirituality.

The gay men's spiritual group for outdoor enthusiasts that springs to mind for many is the Pagan-based Radical Faeries, founded in 1979 by gay rights pioneer and Matachine Society founder Harry Hay, who died last year.

"The Radical Faerie Fellowship is a diverse and unorganized group of gay men who center their spiritual lives around various and sundry pagan doctrines," according to the group's Web site. "While no particular doctrine predominates, the movement is deeply rooted in the precepts of Native American spirituality. There are also Druids, Wiccans, Taoists, Shamans, Hindus and any number of other recognized and unrecognized beliefs present among Radical Faeries."

"Basically, it's a bunch of guys who get together in the '70s spirit of free love," says Ian Schmitz, a longtime participant in outdoor Radical Faerie "gatherings" like the one scheduled this month in Tennessee.

"We aren't afraid of, and in fact celebrate, our sexuality through guileless acts of appreciation for each other," Schmitz says. "Woodsy retreats are perfect settings to be back in touch with Mother Earth and with our feelings for our fellow faggots."

Some Faeries have reclaimed the word "faggot" as a rebuttal to negative use of the term in the same way some gays embrace the word "queer," he says.

The only aspect of the group that every Radical Faerie seems to agree on is that there is no one philosophy that governs their activities.

"We are self-defining," says the group's Web site. "We choose to be who we are, and there is no authority but our hearts. We gather together, get naked and beautiful in oh-so-many different ways, drop the world and open to each other — unless we don't feel like it, in which case we do something else."

THE MORE LOCALLY FOCUSED GAY Spirit Visions is "committed to creating safe, sacred space for loving gay men to explore and strengthen our spiritual identity that is open to all spiritual paths," according to the group's Web site.

The group accomplishes its goal to create a healing, spiritual community and help its members live with integrity by supporting each other and by sharing experiences and insights.

In addition to regular activities including Yoga classes, potluck dinners, "heart circles" for sharing and several retreats, camps and conferences, the group considers itself tribal in nature to provide escape, community and solace to its members.

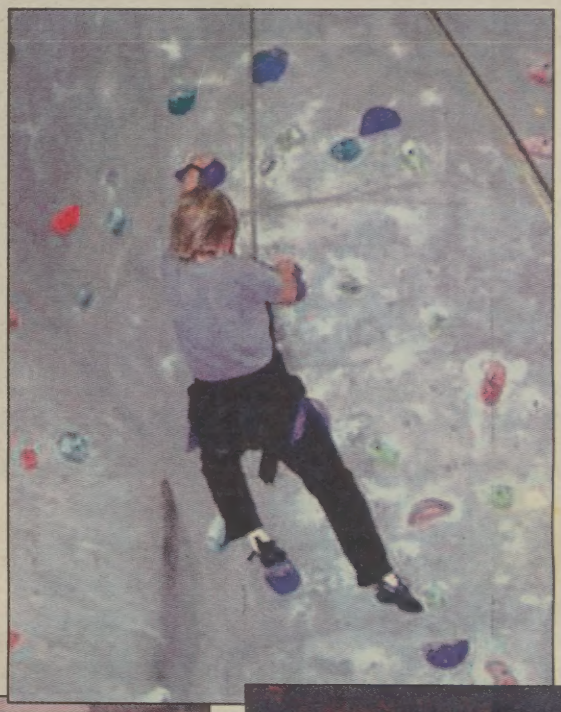
"We at GSV use this tradition to provide a safe place for men who love men to speak from their hearts," the Web site states.

Group representatives did not respond to interview requests by press time.

WITH A GREATER EMPHASIS ON THE outdoors and much less on the spiritual side of enjoying nature, Wilderness Network of Georgia is a 10-year-old organization that provides gay male members a variety of outings on a regular basis.

"WNG is unique in that we focus on purely outdoor-related activities that take place all over the Southeast — and sometimes the country and the world," says Gant Adams, president of WNG. "And our trip calendar typically

Please see **GREAT OUTDOORS** on **Page 55**



Local gay outdoor groups from the specifically spiritual to the more activity-focused concentrate on escaping the city and enjoying the region's rich natural wonders. Members of (from top) **Women's Outdoor Network**, **Gay Spirit Visions** and **Wilderness Network of Georgia** offer activities to celebrate spring. (WON photo by Pat Thomas/Photophetish.com. GSV photo courtesy gayspiritvisions.com. WNG photos by Bruce Hornbuckle.)

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Carla Trujillo wrote personal essays, short stories and 'bad poetry' before creating an award-winning **debut novel.**

Finding her voice

CARLA TRUJILLO'S first novel began as something of an autobiography. But the writing process quickly became tedious.

"I realized, 'This is boring,'" the author says. "So I decided to just make it up and have a good time."

Good choice.

Trujillo's "What Night Brings" is an entertaining, lively and often moving book. The writing is vivid, and the characters live and breathe on the page and in the milieu — a working class Chicano community — that is a rarity in gay fiction.

'What Night Brings' is a story about a young Latina girl's struggle to find and maintain her identity.

Like Marci, the novel's sweet and sassy narrator, Trujillo was a lesbian before she understood the concept.

"I was born loving women," the 46-year-old author says recently from her home in Berkeley, Calif.

A native of New Mexico, Trujillo grew up in Northern California.

The first member of her Mexican American family to go to college, she earned a bachelor's of science degree in human development from the University of California-Davis, as well as master's and doctorate degrees in educational psychology from the University of Wisconsin.

TRUJILLO HAS WORKED IN ACADEMIA as a teacher, counselor and administrator in diversity education since 1979. She is widely published in academic and feminist journals, and she edited the landmark 1991 anthology "Chicana Lesbians: The Girls Our Mothers Warned Us About."

The book won the LAMBDA Book Award for Best Lesbian Anthology and the Out/Write Vanguard Award for Best Pioneering Contribution to the field of Gay/Lesbian Lifestyle Literature.

"Nobody had ever done a book like that before," Trujillo says. "I had never edited a book before, either. It was exhilarating. It was fabulous. I got so jazzed. I think I was inspired as a writer."

Despite her success editing "Chicana Lesbians," and a subsequent book, "Living Chicana Theory," both of which included a selection from her own writing, Trujillo was uncertain about taking on a novel.

"I loved writing stories as a little kid, but I didn't think I could really write fiction," she says. "I had tried poetry, and I was horrible. I'd written personal essays, short stories and bad poetry."

When she sat down to write what became her debut novel, she simply wrote the first line, and the rest of the novel flowed from there, she says.

"It just flew out of my head," Trujillo recalls.

FROM THAT FIRST line — "Every single day of my life, I went to bed asking God to make my dad disappear." — also came the character Marci Cruz, whose agile wisecracks, precocious wisdom and exuberant imagination help make "What Night Brings" sing.

"Marci just came to me," Trujillo says. "She isn't me, but maybe there are little snippets of my personality in her."

Writing the book was "fun," she notes, but also "painful."

Marci's father, a macho drunk who parades his girlfriend in front of his family, emotionally and physically abuses her and her sister.

Writing "What Night Brings" also was laborious. It took Trujillo seven years of nights and weekends to finish the novel.

"The revising is what took so long," explains Trujillo, who had the loving support of her girlfriend, Leslie Larson, in the endeavor. "I wanted to make it good."

She succeeded.

"What Night Brings" won the Mármol Prize for a first book of fiction by a Latina or Latino writer, and authors of the caliber of Dorothy Allison and Sandra Cisneros sing its praises.

Meanwhile, Trujillo is already working on a second novel.

"I don't want to go back to personal essays or academic writing," she says. "I'm dedicated to fiction. It's very challenging. It's hard to do. But you get to make up worlds."

FOR MORE INFO

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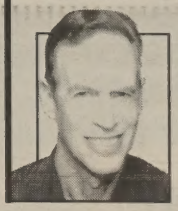

With appearances from famous lesbians like Lily Tomlin and Ellen DeGeneres, set of films **puts the fun in 'dykumentary.'**

Crimes of fashion

FOR OBVIOUS REASONS, I'M NOT THE ultimate arbiter of what will entertain lesbians. But for what it's worth, I enjoyed the heck out of "Lesbian Fashion," the program of shorts presented by IMAGE Film & Video next Tuesday at Red Chair Restaurant & Video Bar.

The umbrella title takes its name from the opener, "Lesbian Fashion?" by Mary Jo Godges and Renee Sotile. The filmmakers took video snapshots of well or interestingly dressed women and shoved a microphone in some celebrities' faces with the question, "What do you think of lesbian fashion?"

Lily Tomlin reminisces about back in the day when "a good lesbian would wear her watch backwards." Michelle Balan says she hopes to see women stop "cutting their hair like Billy Ray Cyrus." Kate Clinton, Chloe Sevigny and Megan Mullally have responses or non-responses, but the best comes from Ellen DeGeneres: "That's gonna be a short documentary."

That's the trouble with "Lesbian Fashion?": It's too little of a good thing. If they could do this well on the spur of the moment, Godges and Sotile could have made something great with a little planning.

NEXT UP IN THE PRESENTATION, DONA Milinkovich and Diane Wilkins made "On Becoming a Woman" in Tallahassee in the scratchy, black-and-white style of 1950s educational films. Subtitled "Chapter 8: The Love that Is Best Left Unspoken," it ranges from amusing to riotously funny as it explores bonding, crushes, best friends and role models before getting down to "The Problem": Lesbianism, which "can be contagious."

If you wonder how previous generations were indoctrinated against homosexuality, this satire isn't far off the mark. If you remember, you'll enjoy it all the more.

In "Size 'em Up," three leering lesbian salespeople (Stella Stevens, Mary Jo Catlett, Magda Harout) are interested in more than a sale when Julie Brown takes her tomboyish teenage daughter Sam (Lindsay Felton) shopping for a bra. Sam's 34 double-Ds are well displayed in a virtual fashion show within this intentionally silly burlesque, written and directed by Christine J. Russo. It ends with a cameo by k.d. lang's partner, Leisha Hailey.

"She Wears Cufflinks" is subtitled "A Documentary about a Poet, a Poem and a Suit." The poet is K. Anne Rickertsen, who gives us her personal story of the birth of a butch, from trousers her grandmother gave her through a junior high band uniform to her favorite suit of "dark blue, double-breasted gabardine."

Lindsay Felton (left) needs a new bra, and **Magda Harout** is one of the lecherous lesbians more than happy to help in 'Size 'Em Up,' one of the offerings in the 'Lesbian Fashion' film series screening at Red Chair Restaurant & Video Bar next week.

The suit is immortalized in the title poem, and no thrift store within 20 miles will be able to keep dark blue, double-breasted gabardine suits in stock after this screening.

The program's weakest item — but still not bad — is "Silhouette," a brief, animated fashion show by Ya-Nan Chou, who has apparently never gotten over playing with paper dolls.

Finally, there's the longest and weirdest — a designation not to be taken lightly in this company — short, "Pretty Ladies: a super8explosion!"

Catherine Crouch gets experimental with this silent-film style romantic comedy about four oil-drilling lesbians (Jock, Jock Clone, Cowboy and Punky) who leave their dorm in search of love and find it after a high priestess (Crouch) blesses them and things go all psychedelic.

Experimental films usually turn me off, but Crouch suggests what Barbara Hammer might do if she had a sense of humor. Shooting mostly in black and white without dialogue, she invites comparison to another fairy tale, Milt Thomas' amazing "Claire," with its total devotion to recreating the silent film experience.

Ultimately, "Lesbian Fashion" offers a range of cinematic styles as wide as the title suggests.

MORE INFO

'Lesbian Fashion'
Tuesday, April 15, 8 p.m.
Red Chair Restaurant & Video Bar
550-C Amsterdam Ave.

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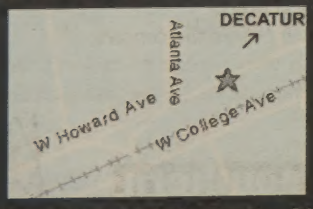

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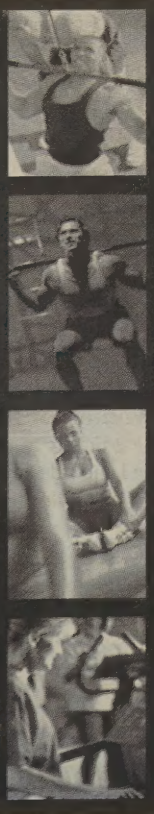

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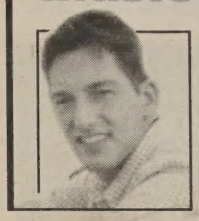

Floetry's songwriting duo Natalie Stewart and Marsha Ambrosius surprised by critical **acclaim surrounding 'Floetic.'**

Floetry in motion

WHEN FLOETRY RECORDED ITS DEBUT album "Floetic," its members had no idea the project would garner so much critical acclaim.

"We were just doing our thing," says Floetry's emcee-songwriter Natalie Stewart. "It only took us three weeks to record the album, and see what's happening now."

Stewart spoke with Southern Voice only minutes after she and singer-songwriter Marsha Ambrosius found out that the group received two Soul Train Music Award nominations. The duo also was nominated this year for an Image Award and three Grammy Awards — not bad for a first venture.

The British hipsters lead an exciting new generation of hip hop and R&B artists who are redefining the genre. Floetry is adding its own flavor to a new generation of soul with an organic mix of old-school soul, punchy rap and spirited lyrics.

The pair brings their cool vibe to Atlanta on Sunday, April 13, at the Variety Playhouse.

AMBROSIUS AND STEWART ROSE TO some success in the mid-'90s as a songwriting duo, composing music for Jill Scott and Michael Jackson. The song "Butterflies" on Jackson's "Invincible" is an example.

The gals moved from hometown London to Philadelphia in 2000 and got involved in grassroots music making, jamming away on open mic nights and eventually getting a recording contract with DreamWorks Records.

Ambrosius' compelling vocals combined with Stewart's spoken-word, slam poetry are refreshingly upbeat and consistently centered on love and personal respect. Up-tempo hip-hop beats such as "Floetic" and "Big Ben" are followed by female-affirming and often love-struck tunes, including the tamely erotic "Say Yes" and the jazzy "Getting Late."

While preparing for a performance on "The Tonight Show," Ambrosius and Stewart speak extensively about the fusion of soul and spoken word that is Floetry.

"In our music, we really want to convey empowerment, truth and realism," Ambrosius says. "People can achieve miracles if they stay true to themselves, believe in their abilities and take responsibility for themselves."

According to Stewart, this message can even be elevated to a higher level of music and spirituality.

"In everything that I create, I try to promote love. I am fighting a spiritual war as opposed to a material war," she says. "The thing that really makes a democracy is not so much a left wing versus a right wing, but more the coexistence of art and politics. Art can be a very strong opposing voice. ... art is something people embrace, because they see themselves reflected in it."

British hipsters **Natalie Stewart** (left) and **Marsha Ambrosius** talk about the fusion of soul and spoken word that is Floetry on the eve of their first Atlanta appearance. (Photo courtesy DreamWorks Records)

As an artist, Stewart does not feel constrained by increasing commercial pressure and political correctness in America, she says.

"ART IS SUBLIMINAL," STEWART muses. "As a real musician, you know how to channel truth, art and excitement. In that way, you can always beat any constraints."

The hip-hop scene is often criticized among gays for its machismo and conservative slant.

"We don't affiliate ourselves with any of that," Stewart says.

The band welcomes gay fans, but cautions against singling them out as different from any other hip-hop aficionados.

"We have a lot of fans, and I am sure we have gays fans," Stewart says. "But if I look in the audience I can't tell.

"We feel connected to every human being, gay or straight. We love all tribes. There are so many subcultures and groups; I have no time for separation and segregation."

MORE INFO

'Floetic'
Floetry
(DreamWorks Records, 2002)
www.floetry.net

Floetry in concert
April 13, 8:30 p.m.
Variety Playhouse
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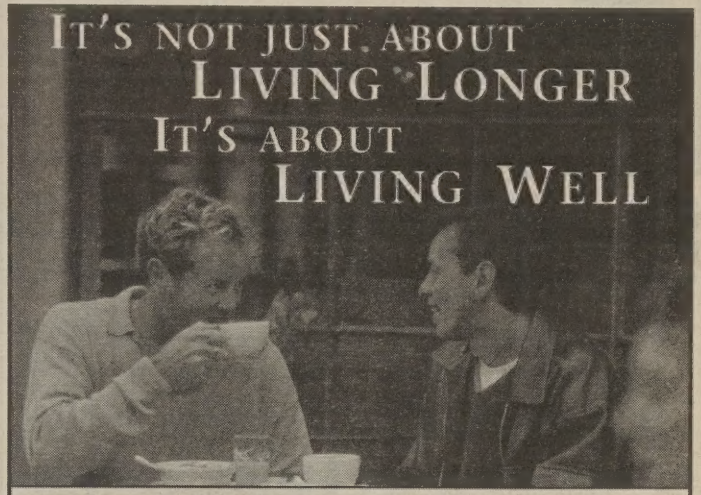

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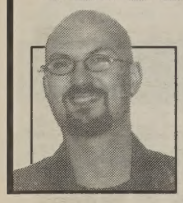

Cable Network hinting **'Soul Food'** will start new season with lesbian kiss for one of show's youngest sisters.

Showtime's kiss just a kiss?

THE FOURTH SEASON OF THE SHOWtime series "Soul Food," which began April 9, started with a bang as one lead character engaged in a passionate kiss with another woman.

Based on the 1997 film, "Soul Food" follows three African American sisters and their extended families. Teri (Nicole Ari Parker) is a hard-driven lawyer. Maxine (Vanessa Williams) is a social worker. And Bird (Malinda Williams) is a hairdresser with an occasional spot on a local TV news show.

Gay issues have been fairly non-existent on the show, which normally deals with the sisters' troubles with boyfriends, husbands and family. But that changes slightly this season.

Producers are keeping their lips sealed about the upcoming lesbian dalliance, seemingly to tease the show's viewers and keep the plot private. They did release a statement that describes Bird as "the more adventurous of the sisters," who is open to new ideas and more willing to try different things.

As for the specific details, they said Bird befriends her producer Eva (Terri J. Vaughn) on the television news show.

"She has no qualms about the woman's sexuality, and as friends, they form a close bond and intimacy," the producers say, "which spills over into a physical moment, a somewhat passionate kiss."

Bird's sisters question her motives, but the hairdresser is not fazed by the kiss.

SO IT SEEMS THAT THIS WILL BE AN isolated incident, and that Bird is not about to plunge into a long-term lesbian relationship. But Eva is scheduled to appear in several episodes.

Of course, it also raises the specter of that tired device of May sweeps — the sensationalist "lesbian kiss" between straight characters — that has boosted ratings for shows like "Ally McBeal," "Rosanne" and "Friends."

Because gays of color have always been scarce on the small screen, if Eva sticks around a while, it will be a notable step for the acclaimed series. But she won't be alone.

The upper echelons of cable television showcase several other black gay characters, in contrast to the almost lily-white world of network television.

HBO offers "Six Feet Under," with the prickly Keith (actor Matthew St. Patrick), a gay former police officer now working as a security guard. HBO also has a black lesbian cop on its urban drug-war drama "The Wire." The show also features a gay drug dealer in a supporting role. FX's original police drama "The Shield" includes a black rookie cop struggling to accept his homosexuality.

AND SHOWTIME WILL SOON GIVE viewers a substantial look at lesbian relationships, regardless of how "Soul Food" treats its lesbian characters. Production starts later this month on a show with an all-lesbian ensemble, tentatively titled "Earthlings." The two-hour pilot episode airs in January 2004.

Malinda Williams, *who portrays Bird on 'Soul Food,' will share a passionate kiss with another woman on the cable television show's third season. (Photo by Ken Woroner/Showtime)*

The show seems worth waiting for. Rose Troche, the director of "Go Fish" and "The Safety of Objects," directs the episode. The cast includes such notables as Laurel Holloman ("The Incredibly True Adventures of Two Girls in Love"), Jennifer Beals ("Flashdance") and African-American old school diva Pam Grier, who plays the mentor to a group of lesbians in their 20s.

The series is described as a "lesbian Queer as Folk," but its creators promise a more serious show and a more diverse cast. With Grier and Beals alone, there's more people of color than the entire QAF cast.

The initial premise of "Earthlings" concerns a young woman (Mia Kirshner) who moves to California to be with her boyfriend, only to become involved with the woman next door.

Beyond that, we're just going to have to wait and see.

MORE INFO
'Soul Food'
Showtime
Wednesdays at 10 p.m.

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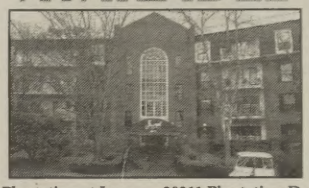

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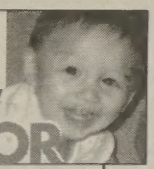
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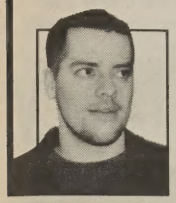
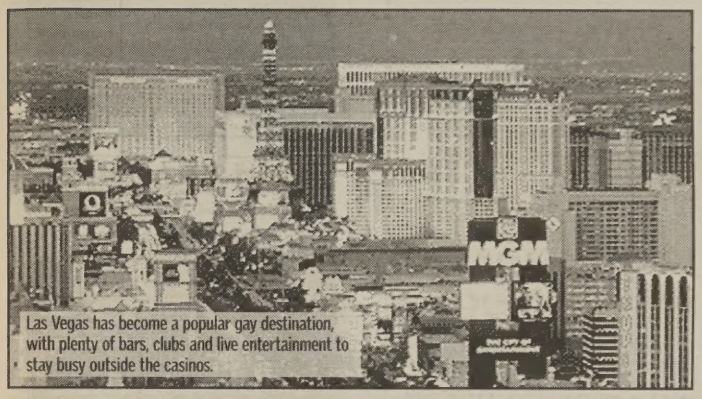


Have fun **spending money** in Sin City with an array of entertainment options, even for gay travelers who don't gamble.



Las Vegas has become a popular gay destination, with plenty of bars, clubs and live entertainment to stay busy outside the casinos.

Gay Vegas on a budget

LAS VEGAS HAS ALWAYS BEEN A terrific city for bargain hunters and big spenders alike. It's a land of extremes, an intensely glowing metropolis of lights surrounded by a veritable black hole of barren desert.

You can stay in decent hotels that cost less than an economy rental car, or you can splurge on a lavish dinner at a chichi French restaurant that costs more than a plane ticket to Paris.

For gay travelers, Las Vegas has become increasingly popular — and not only among gamblers. Gay tourists from California, Arizona and other Western states have moved here in droves during the past decade, lured by a mushrooming job market and the low cost of living.

The gay nightlife scene has flourished, offering not only conventional bars and discos, but also outlandish drag and musical acts at casino nightclubs.

Deciding how to spend your money is an enjoyable dilemma in Las Vegas — there's much to see and do, and it's easy to have a good time no matter your economic situation. Here's the lowdown on the hot deals and decadent delights of Sin City.

Casino hotels make their money on gaming rather than room revenue, keeping rates low in hopes that guests will gamble more. If you wager a lot in the casinos, you may have fun, but you're likely to leave town with empty pockets.

One reliable money-saving strategy is eating at the cheap buffets found at nearly every casino. Favorites include the six jointly owned casinos with "station" in their name: Boulder Station, Sunset Station, Texas Station, and so on. Station Casinos, Inc., is also one of the most gay-inclusive job recruiters in the city.

THE CITY'S BUSTLING CLUB SCENE is another easy place to score bargains — many of the city's gay and lesbian bars offer tantalizing drink specials.

Favorite clubs include Free Zone, one of the best mixed-gender queer clubs; Cobalt disco, which draws a cruisy, social bunch, especially for its Sunday tea dance; and Icon of Las Vegas, the city's classic cruise bar, with diverse dance music, a fireplace, and comfy seating — it's where many people go before heading next door to Gipsy, the main dance club for the younger set. The Las Vegas Eagle is leather central and also serves cheap drinks.

The glitzy shows in Las Vegas can set you back a lot, but the gay showbar Sasha's, home to the city's longest-running drag revue, has reasonable cover charges as well as a moderately priced restaurant.

Campy Hamburger Mary's, which is open 24/7, serves great burgers and American chow; the dishy employees, some of whom dress in drag, are a hoot. Cool Cat Cafe is a popular coffeehouse with the gay community and a nice option for sandwiches, desserts, and coffee or tea.

As for hotels, the Riviera is a gay favorite. This centrally located but slightly dated amalgam of towers and wings has spacious guest rooms that cost as little as $29. The club La Cage features Frank Marino, who stars as "Joan Rivers" and headlines a cast of female impersonators; this long-running Vegas extravaganza costs $30.

Nearby, the gay-friendly Stratosphere offers special rates during Las Vegas Pride but is always a bargain; the sleek rooms at this massive hotel-casino complex, which is anchored by an 1,149-foot tower, start at an amazingly low $19 midweek. The only drawback: you'll have to cab it or drive (albeit a short way) to the more popular casinos.

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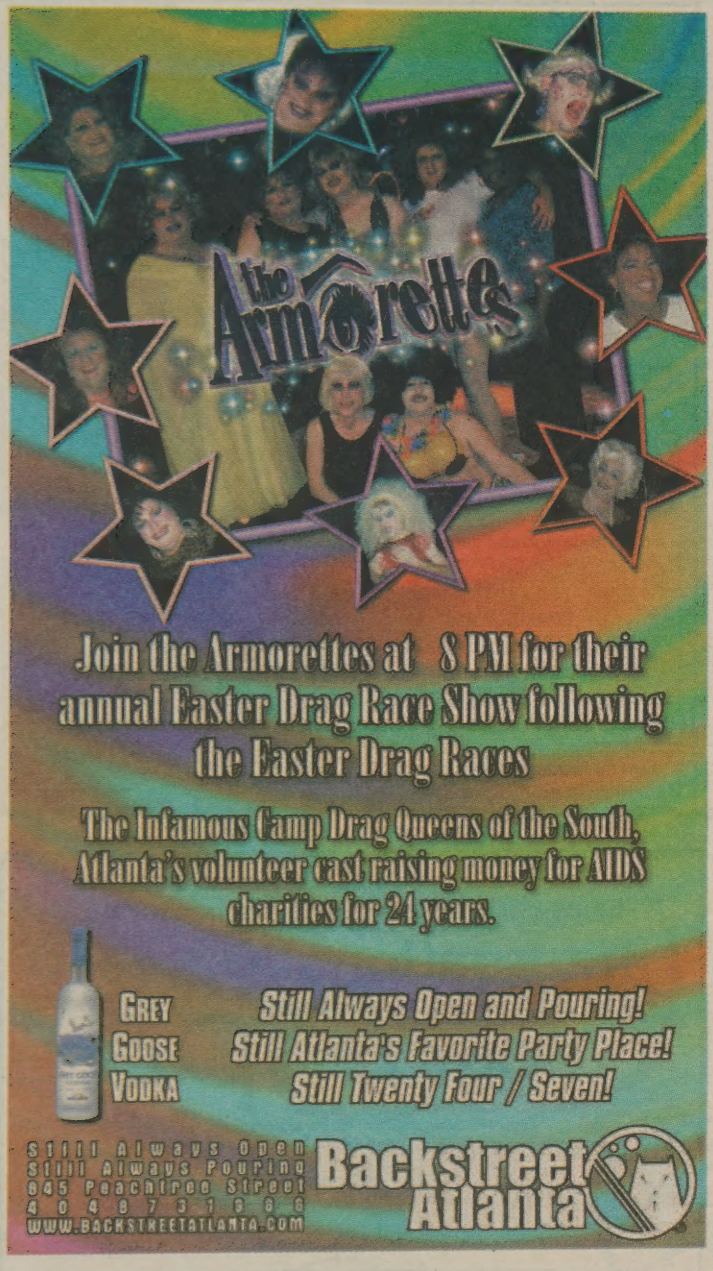
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Something about Mary

Will Dick Cheney really fly to Jordan and rescue his lesbian daughter?

Rumor has it that **Mary Cheney**, the vice president's daughter, is planning travel to Iraq as part of an antiwar demonstration. (Photo by AP)

MARY CHENEY, THE LESBIAN daughter of U.S. Vice President **DICK CHENEY**, is apparently involved in the U.S.-Iraq war.

In fact, the vice president plans to travel to Amman, the capital of Jordan, to talk his daughter into returning to the states, according to the London-based Arabic daily newspaper Al Quds Al Arabi.

"Cheney will arrive in Amman ... [to] try to convince his daughter, who is currently staying at a hotel in Amman, not to go to Baghdad along with a group of volunteers who want to go to Iraq and form human shields against the Anglo-American attacks," the newspaper states.

But the U.S. embassy in Jordan told Arab-American newspaper Al Bawaba that Daddy's visit is a fabrication.

"The embassy has no information that the U.S. vice president will arrive in Jordan to convince one of his daughters not to travel to Iraq to join human shields opposed to the war," a spokesperson told the paper.

Al Bawaba offers the unsupported opinion that the daughter in question is Mary. I guess assuming that Mary would protest for peace is like assuming she wears Birkenstocks and shops at Home Depot.

Since gaining national attention during the 2000 presidential campaign as the gay daughter of the then-candidate, Mary has stayed away from the spotlight.

Last we heard, she was still living in Colorado and working for Coors Brewing Co. Let's assume she's still there, until she calls to say otherwise.

WHEN A SCREEN LEGEND REFUSES to die, at least she can retire, and that's what **ELIZABETH TAYLOR**, who hasn't really done anything big since the "Flintstones," says she will do.

Elizabeth Taylor

The grandmother of all tabloid divas planned to retire after parading on stage with the other all-time Oscar winners at the Academy Awards ceremony.

"That will be my swan song," she told Entertainment Weekly. "[Acting] seems kind of superficial because now my life is AIDS, not acting."

Taylor later decided not to attend the ceremony "in light of world events," according to People magazine.

The actress with a movie career spanning some 60 years also has a 20-year career as an AIDS activist, mostly for the American Foundation for AIDS Research, which helps raise money to fight HIV.

Well, Ms. Taylor, you'd better cozy up to the organization, because they're a little miffed at you. **DR. MATHILDE KRIM**, one of the big cheeses at amfAR, apparently has been saying some disparaging things about Taylor, according to Page Six, the New York Post's gossip column.

It all started in early March, when Taylor received an award from amfAR for her years of service, and the movie star's appearance at the ceremony was supposed to raise big money because it was one of her few public sightings of the year.

But Taylor also received an award the next night at a $2,500-a-plate benefit for a cancer foundation. A source said Krim called Taylor when she learned about the cancer foundation event because 50 percent of the funds raised there were for Elton John's AIDS charity.

SCANTILY-CLAD POP SINGER **MARIAH CAREY** finally discovered the beauty of gay clubs. She's not taking her shirt off to dance under the disco ball just yet, but gossip columnist **LIZ SMITH** says the star was energized by her recent — and first — performance in a gay club in London.

"The boys, who appreciate all aspects of Mariah's career, including the hilarious 'Glitter,' went crazy for her," Smith wrote. "Her reception was so enthusiastic, she plans to pit-stop at other gay spots, abroad and over here."

You can say a lot of things about gay people, but please, please don't say that we actually enjoyed "Glitter!"

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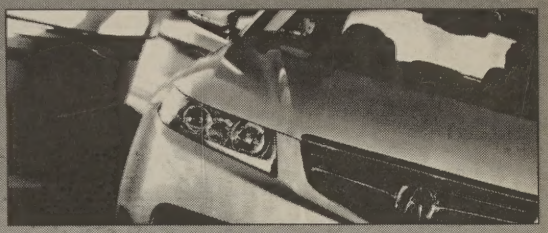

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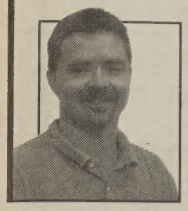


'Homebody' and 'Manna' likely looked good on paper, but productions **don't live up** to potential of seasoned playwrights' talents.

From page to stage

IF THE EVENTS OF 9/11 DIDN'T happen, gay playwright Tony Kushner's "Homebody/Kabul" would probably have been a footnote in his career. These days, the drama — now being staged at Horizon Theater — seems chillingly perceptive.

"Homebody/Kabul" stars Carolyn Cook as the Homebody, a British woman prone to long, drawn-out conversations who decides to visit Afghanistan. When she disappears, her family and friends go looking for her in Kabul. One report has her dead; another has her married.

Kushner seems incapable of writing a nice, tidy little drama. His "Angels in America" was two whole plays, and "Homebody/Kabul" logs in at nearly four hours.

The first act is a one-hour-plus monologue in which the Homebody talks and talks — and talks. Fortunately, Cook is spot-on, able to inject some humor and humanity. Still, for more than an hour, she does nothing but ramble. She doesn't even leave her chair.

Vincent Murphy directs "Homebody" as well as he can, but the lead character ultimately seems a little like the playwright himself: more interested in proving his intelligence than engaging an audience.

WHEN THE PLAY SHIFTS TO Afghanistan, it's considerably better. The Homebody's husband Milton (Charles Horton) and daughter Priscilla (Monica Williamson) try to determine if the Homebody is really dead.

"Homebody/Kabul" isn't quite the event it should be. The drama only really stings in the final two acts. At this length, it's simply a task to sit through. Kushner could easily have made a dandy two and a half hour play.

Still, the show does offer moments of sheer power. Kushner's — and Horizon's timing — is impeccable. The playwright's words are often penetrating, especially when one character warns that the Taliban is "coming to New York."

My suggestion: see it, but take some caffeine — or maybe take a good nap before hand.

"MANNA" IS THE NEW FARCICAL TALE by Steve Murray, who penned the splendid "Rescue and Recovery." Fate is among its themes, as two of its characters meet in a park.

Lily (Heather Starkel) is a dumb blonde who falls for young Derek (Brian Crawford). He is the assistant to Anna (Kathleen Wattis), a professor who, through another coincidence, begins having phone sex with Lily's father Richard (Kim Shipley.) The other major player is Blake (Ryan Kipp), a bisexual gigolo. As "Manna" progresses, these characters crisscross in other ways.

Gay playwright Tony Kushner goes longwinded in 'Homebody/Kabul,' a ripped-from-the-headlines drama featuring **Carolyn Cook** (foreground) and **Lisa Parks** at Horizon Theatre.

"Manna" begins promisingly enough, with a sprinkling of Murray's patented one-liners. But it's hard to understand what the playwright is trying to say here.

At times, the production comes across as cynical and mean-spirited, with needless shock value thrown in and an inane subplot about a female cop with multiple personalities investigating a murder.

"Rescue and Recovery" was joyous, warm and often erotic, but "Manna" just seems excessively harsh. My first reaction was to rush home and take a long, soothing shower.

Former Actor's Express artistic director Wier Harman directs and gets nice work from the always appealing Wattis. Starkel's metamorphoses from ditz to schemer is also well calculated. But the young men — Crawford and Kipp — aren't always as captivating.

Murray deserves credit for trying something different and attempting to juggle so much at one time. Maybe "Manna" looked sharp on the page, but it simply doesn't work on stage.

MORE INFO

'Homebody/ Kabul'
Through May 11
Horizon Theatre
1083 Austin Ave.
404-584-7450

'Manna'
Through April 27
Actor's Express
King Plow Arts Center
887 W. Marietta St., NW
404-607-7469

appts.

SATURDAY APRIL 12

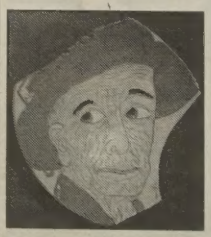
Gay playwright and performer Tim Miller hosts a **Town Hall Meeting** at 9: 15 p.m. on immigration rights for gay couples. The session follows an 8 p.m. performance of Miller's 'Us,' his latest one-man show about his real-life struggle to keep an immigrant partner in the U.S. 7 Stages Mainstage, 1105 Euclid Ave. $20. 404-523-7647, www.7stages.com

The **Atlanta Freedom Marching Band** jazzes up Fourth Tuesday's Spring Fling from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Atlanta History Center, 130 West Paces Ferry Road. 404-622-0666, www.afmb.org

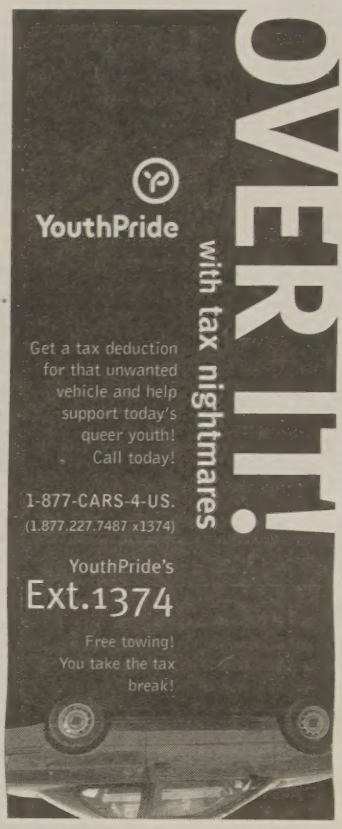
The Boybutante AIDS Foundation in Athens goes Bond-style for the **14th Annual Boybutante Ball**. Themed "Double-O-Diva," the evening is the culmination of weeklong events to take place at the 40 Watt Club, 285 W. Washington Ave., Athens. 706-227-3530, www.boybutante.org

Self-described gay-acoustic-indie-folk-pop musician **Wayne Fishell** joins musicians Nik Evans, Claire Kelltlebelle and Lindsey Hinkle for an artists' roundtable from 8 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. at the IF Coffeehouse, 269 Mathews Ave., NE, www.ifcoffeehouse.com

FRIDAY APRIL 18



Catch gay artist **David Babb** one last time before he moves away at an opening reception for his most recent sculpture, pottery and wall hangings from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. in the Mudfire Gallery, 1441 Dresden Drive, Suite 250. 404-969-3260, www.mudifre.com



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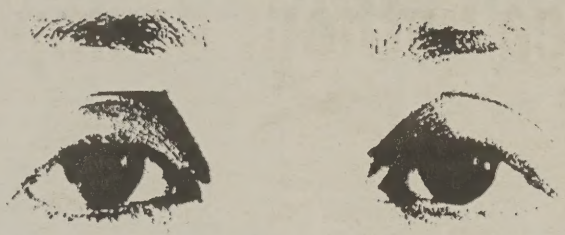

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Tea without crumpets

FOR THOSE WHO CRAVE A FORMAL afternoon tea, it's a treat to get dolled up and head for the lobby lounge of the Ritz-Carlton Buckhead. Visitors there are cosseted in baronial English-style surroundings where they can nibble dainty sandwiches and tiny pastries.

But Teaspace is another planet entirely.

Teaspace is tiny and obscure in a little alley in Little Five Points. Inside, the low, L-shaped room has an appealing and ingenious austerity. The colors are non-colors: white and natural wood. There's a Japanese sensibility in details like a tree trunk holding up a partition.

The furniture — handcrafted of varnished plywood — is simple and geometric. It's comfortable, too — though the noise of these chairs scraping across the bare concrete floor is jarring.

So is the design of the menu. It's artily right justified, which is counterintuitive to this Western reader. Call me slow, but until I figured this out, I kept thinking, Why did they print this upside down?

> The menu, which changes every month or so, is strongly pan-Asian and vegetarian in leaning, although some dishes include seafood.

These irritations do not detract from Teaspace's genuine originality and atmospheric coolness. There's nothing else quite like it.

TEA, OF COURSE, IS A BIG DEAL here. There's an entire page of tea choices. There's also a small but generally well considered menu of snacks and meals, at true bargain prices.

Among teas, the house specialties are the "bubble teas," which have tapioca pearls in them that are brown and the size of a fingertip. The drink comes in a tall glass with a fat straw to suck them up.

This idea makes me want to gag. I am told bubble teas are the rage in Asia, but I freely admit that I am being culturally narrow. So shoot me.

But please don't do it before I get a chance to eat again at Teaspace. The menu, which changes every month or so, is strongly pan-Asian and vegetarian in leaning, although some dishes include seafood.

An appetizer of somosas offered as a special is a refreshing change from the typical example, because the triangular dumplings aren't deep fried. They are stuffed with a mixture of mashed potato blended with heady smoked tomato and a zingy bit of chili.

A small mound of cucumber salad spiked with slivers of red bell pepper and a minty raita sauce of yogurt and pureed vegetables comes on the plate. This is an altogether wonderful dish.

AN ENTRÉE CALLED TOFU Treasure Balls includes about half a dozen of these hushpuppy-sized nuggets, which are made of herb-seasoned tofu. They're breaded and very lightly fried.

Try them with either noodles, jasmine rice or black rice. That last is Thai wild rice, and it has a wonderfully explosive texture. A salad of field greens with cilantro leaves comes along, as do two red chili sauces, one sweet and one hot.

Served in a big white bowl, as are many offerings here, this ample $7.50 dish is one of the city's true bargains.

A bowl of vegetables in soupy, mild coconut milk-based masaman curry sauce includes potato and carrot slices, mushrooms, onion and cashews. It is toped with avocado relish and comes over a choice of rice or noodles. Choose eggplant cubes — perfectly cooked but still holding their shape — or tofu for $8.50. With shrimp, it's $10.

The shrimp and grits, however, should be repaired — or retired altogether.

It comes with delicious, meltingly soft mustard greens. But the little dabs of peach chutney are inadequate to sauce the huge mound of too-dry grits. The shrimp itself is overcooked to a repellent density.

Still, I'd happily work my way through the rest of the menu. Just don't make me swallow any of those icky bubbles.

teaspace

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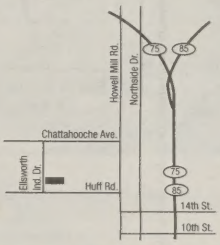

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GREAT OUTDOORS, continued from Page 37

includes activities like hiking, biking, camping, rafting, backpacking, tubing, rock climbing, rappelling, caving and other outdoor activities."

The group "tends to attract the 'post bar' crowd who are more interested in socializing with other gay men in a relaxed, unforced atmosphere without the typical pressures and downsides of the bar scene," Adams says.

And members don't have to be athletic experts to join, he notes.

"We have members whose outdoor skill set ranges from novice to expert in any given activity," he says.

Above all, the group is not a nudist or "sex in the woods" organization, Adams emphasizes. Every member joins the group's activities for individual reasons, and Adams says his reasons include the energizing personal effects of being outdoors.

"Participating in outdoor activities provides balance and clarity to my everyday life, and I enjoy being able to be both physically active outdoors in the fresh air as well as quiet and contemplative," he says. "Communing with nature, for me, is part of a balanced life/lifestyle and provides me with both physical and mental stimulation and satisfaction."

Members of the Radical Faeries get in touch with nature with a variety of activities at their 'gatherings,' including a retreat to Tennessee this month. (Photo courtesy Ian Schimtz)

AS A PERFECT FOIL TO WNG'S GROUP FOR men, Women's Outdoor Network is an Atlanta-based group of women who get together regularly for fun in the sun.

"Women who like nature, the outdoors, having fun, sports and other women will love the Women's Outdoor Network," says Jamie Higgins, WON president. "We strive to bring some of the beauty and serenity Georgia has to offer to our members."

In addition to hiking, kayaking and cycling, WON's outdoor enthusiasts enjoy camping, canoeing, basketball, caving and picnics, just to name a few activities. Members meet quarterly to suggest and plan their outings.

And the spiritual side effects of getting back to nature are not lost on WON members, Higgins says.

"Breaking from the routine, experiencing the event with like-minded women and getting back to basics reminds you that there is more to life than the current stresses you are facing and can help put things in perspective," Higgins says. "Although metro Atlanta and its spectacular trees has to be one of the most beautiful cities in the U.S., spending week after week in the city can take its toll on us spiritually.

"Getting away, even for just a few hours, often helps WON members re-connect with nature and the wonder of our state," she says.

Like WNG, the women's group welcomes members of all skill levels.

MORE INFO

Women's Outdoor Network
770-937-6770
www.wonatlanta.com

Hiking
April 19

Beginners kayaking on the Broad River
April 26

Hiking at Pigeon Mountain
April 27

Strawberry Picking Feast
May 4

Wilderness Network of Georgia
P.O. Box 79131
Atlanta, GA 30357
www.wildnetga.org
Panther Creek 7-mile day hike
Skull Shoals ghost town day hike
April 19

Chattooga River Rafting
April 27

Okefenokee Swamp canoe/camping
May 1-4

Panola Mountain day hike
May 3

Carolina Foothill two week, 75-mile backpacking/camping/hiking
May 8-20

Eastatoe Creek backpacking/camping
May 10-11

Flat Shoals camping
May 16-18

Burrells Ford camping
May 17-18

North Carolina 'mountain to sea' hiking
May 23-26

Appalachian Trail backpacking/camping
May 24-26

Broad River canoeing
May 31

Radical Faeries
www.radfae.org

Atlanta Radical Faeries
snakeowl@bigfoot.com

April 26-May 4
Gathering at Short Mountain Sanctuary
247 Sanctuary Lane
Liberty, TN 37095
615-563-4397

Gay Spirit Visions
www.gayspiritvisions.org

Potluck dinners
Fourth Saturday of every month
gayspirit@mindspring.com

Heart Circles Tribal Council
Second Sunday of every month
Benlinton4@aol.com

Yoga
Every Tuesday
Buffalonimbus@yahoo.com

Spring Retreat
April 18-20
Mountain Retreat & Learning Centers
Highland, NC
828-526-5838
gayspirit@mindspring.com

Summer Camp
June 18-22
Mountain Retreat & Learning Centers

Fall Conference
Sept. 17-21
Mountain Retreat & Learning Centers

'Womyn' festivals celebrate great outdoors with music, camaraderie

By MIKE FLEMING

A LOVE OF THE OUTDOORS INSPIRES LIVE MUSIC FESTIvals that begin as soon as outside temperatures rise and continue through the fall.

The Gulf Coast Womyn's Festival and the Southern Womyn's Festival kick off the season with popular performers and camping under the stars with a distinct lesbian bent.

First up, the 15th Annual Gulf Coast Womyn's Festival takes place at lesbian-owned Camp Sister Spirit in Ovett, Miss., over Easter Weekend April 17-20.

"This festival creates a community of sisters of many ages, many races and many walks of life for empowerment, encouragement and entertainment," says Brenda Henson, who founded the Camp Sister Spirit site with her partner, Wanda Henson.

Holly Near, a 30-year veteran of lesbian folk music, heads next month's lineup at the Southern Womyn's Festival.

The couple faced adversity when they decided to found the site, which boasts cabins, campsites and communal living quarters for visitors in addition to hosting events like the festival. After years of harassment and failed legal attempts to shut down the site based on moral objections from neighboring residents, the Hensons haven't experienced any such actions in more than four years and now co-exist peacefully with neighbors, they say.

"We wanted to create a place for self-sufficiency, a place for creating indigenous lesbian culture, a place from which to share food and clothing with neighbors, a place to work and to care," Henson says. "The people in town know that now, and we get along great."

This year's lineup at the festival includes vegetarian and meat dishes, a craft show, 12-step meetings for those who desire them, games, booths and workshops. Musicians scheduled to perform include such lesbian favorites as Lucie Blue, Dorothy Hirsch, Trish Williams, Shelley Graff, Bonnie Morris, Beth Peterson and Flash SilverMoon.

Pre-registration is required, and men and accompanied children are welcome, Henson says.

AS THE HOMIER GULF COAST FESTIVAL ATTRACTS hundreds of visitors from around the region, Southern Womyn's Festival books big name lesbian acts that draw national crowds to its women-only festivities.

The May 8-12 event this year features godmothers of lesbian folk Holly Near and Cris Williamson, whose tour already stopped in Atlanta with the same solo sets and a duet finale expected at the festival.

Other big-name performers, including Ember Swift, lesbian duo Halcyon, comedians Vickie Shaw and Marga Gomez and spoken word artists Robin G. White and C.C. Carter, are set to appear.

"There's something for everyone, no matter what your musical preference," says Linda Jackson, co-producer of the event.

The site of the festival this year is Dragon Hills, one hour west of Atlanta near Carollton, Ga.

"We are really looking forward to our new location," says Pat Cobb, the other co-producer. "It is more centrally located for women in the South, and we are hoping to have a record attendance this year."

The first 300 women to register with four-day passes are eligible to win a seven-day vacation at a female-owned resort in the Virgin Islands.

MORE INFO

Gulf Coast Womyn's Festival
April 17-20
Camp Sister Spirit
Ovett, MS
www.campsisterspirit.com

Southern Womyn's Festival
May 8-12
www.gaywomyn.org
904-725-8079 (between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m. only)
Dragon Hills
2800 West Highway 5
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SMYAL Seeks Executive Director

The Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League (SMYAL)-- a 501c3 youth center offering support and coaching to gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex and questioning youth in Washington DC metro area is seeking an **executive director** to assume overall financial and operational management of the organization and is responsibile for implementing the strategic plan developed by the Board. ED will be strong and collaborative leader with a proven track record in staff supervision, budgeting and financial management and fundraising. Resumes due by May 6, 2003. Competitive salary and benefits. Email edsearch@smyal.org for position decription and application guidelines.

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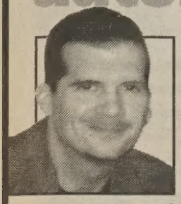

How to play the numbers on affordable but cool cars and come out a winner

Five under 25

Toyota Echo

SUCH A MAGICAL NUMBER, 25. A silver anniversary. The sum of the first five odd numbers (1,3,5,7,9). And five years to the big three-O. Ah, the lure of Botox injections.

It's also the limit (at $25,000) that many gay guy or gal needs to go cruisin' — in a car, that is.

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Ford Taurus

PRACTICAL

Ford Taurus sedan
$19,415-$23,730

Tired of the club scene? Need something sensible to offset your party-animal aura? Then look no further than the stable Taurus.

For 18 years, consumers have been bullish on Ford's bread-and-butter sedan. Practical. Roomy. And loaded as in standard features, not the sobriety status of your last circuit party playmate.

Thanks to high crash-test scores, it's also safe and secure. If only that were true of some blind dates, as well. But we digress.

Side air bags and antilock brakes are optional. Best of all, automaker rebates and dealer incentives mean thousands off the sticker. All the better to jet off on an RSVP cruise.

A possible downside: Such rebates/incentives may mean a poor resale price later. All the better to stay home and watch "Will & Grace" reruns instead.

STYLISH

Mazda 6 sport sedan
$19050-$21,620

If macho is more your style, then jump in the athletic Mazda 6. Available in manual or automatic transmission, the V6 engine easily outruns the base model's pokey 4 cylinder.

The ride is firm yet smooth. The handling is taut but compliant. Fit and finish are highly toned with sleek trim inside and a muscular, head-turning body.

Damn, it's one of the few cars that force you to the gym so you can look as buff as it does. A tight rear — not a good thing in this case — means lots of knee-knocking for backseat passengers. But the 60/40 split folding rear seat expands an already generous trunk.

Anti-whiplash front seats are a plus, as are optional side and head-curtain airbags. And as if there weren't enough creature comforts throughout, lighted audio/cruise-control switches are available on the steering wheel. A 10 for looks. Ditto for driving pleasure.

Mazda 6

FUN

Toyota Echo compact coupe/sedan
$10,105-$10,695

Sometimes you feel like a nut, sometimes you don't. With Toyota's Echo, it easy to have fun either way. Nutty details include the speedometer, which is in the top center of the dash (instead of on the left, in front of the steering wheel). Then there's the funky, egg-shaped body—for high driving position, easy access, and, oops, some sway when

Please see FIVE UNDER 25 on Page 61

HOMES FOR SALE, Page 66

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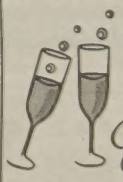

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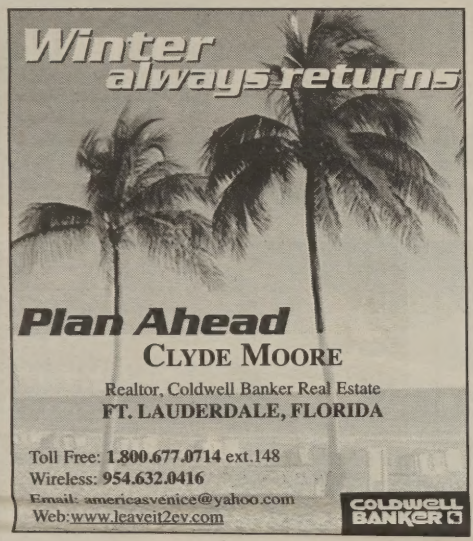

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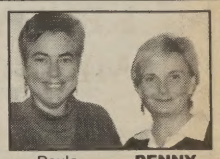

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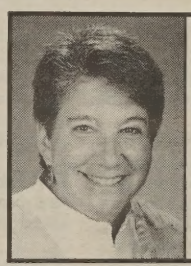

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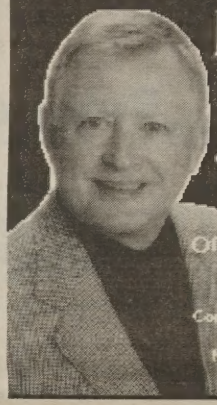

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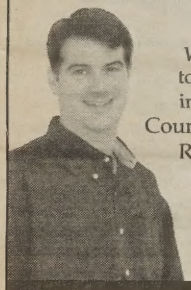

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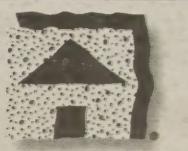

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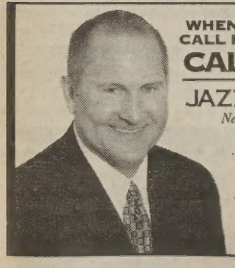

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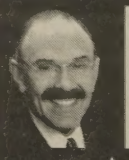

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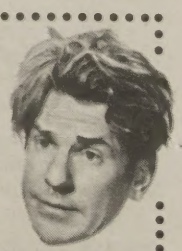

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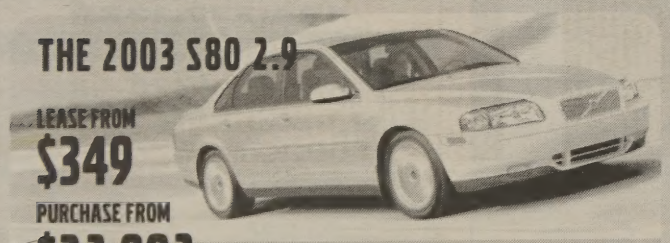

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home

More great cars that won't break the bank

FIVE UNDER 25, continued from **Page 57**

cornering. But think of this as another way of groovin' to the music (just don't get too carried away — literally).

More traditional features include tons of storage nooks. A spirited four-cylinder — in either manual or automatic — gets an impressive 38 mpg. And inside, it's as quiet as the live audience dozing through Bette Midler's failed sitcom.

Perhaps the only sour note: Most features aren't standard, they're options — even the clock. Still, even at $19,500 with all bells and whistles included, this automotive bit of whimsy is way below our $25,000 limit.

CUTTING EDGE

Pontiac Vibe sport wagon
$16,435-19,735
MPG: 26

Lord knows many gays can't see themselves in a station wagon. But a gas-guzzling

Pontiac Vibe

SUV seems so politically incorrect these days. And last time I checked, minivans were strictly for breeders and FTD deliveries.

But back to the point: How to get the usefulness of a wagon/SUV/minivan without sacrificing every hip tip Martha taught us before that nasty stock-manipulation scandal?

Just check out Pontiac's all-new sport wagon, which blends the usefulness of a 5-door hatchback with the handling and comfort of a small sedan. Based on the popular Toyota Matrix, the Vibe is boxy-chic, nimble and spacious — no small feat considering it's slightly shorter than the Honda Civic sedan.

Backseats fold down for a large, flat floor. Power comes from a so-so 4-cylinder or a peppy V6. Side airbags and ABS are options on some models. And at 26 mpg, this trendy car makes both a fashion and political statement.

VERSATILE

Subaru Forester SUV
$20,545-22,895

Introduced five years ago, Subaru's Forester was fully redesigned for 2003. It's fresher, larger and has an all-new body for better handling.

Best of all, the "Martina-mobile" is full of standard features, including power windows, locks and mirrors, cruise control, tilt steering, AM/FM/weatherband/CD audio, side airbags, ABS, daytime running lights and remote keyless entry.

Other plusses include better brakes, high crash-test results and two option packages: cold-weather and premium level. It still offers high, firm seating, a car-like ride and full-time/all-wheel drive.

So, like Ellen DeGeneres before and after Anne Heche, Forester still retains all the original qualities that made it appealing in the first place.

Subaru Forester

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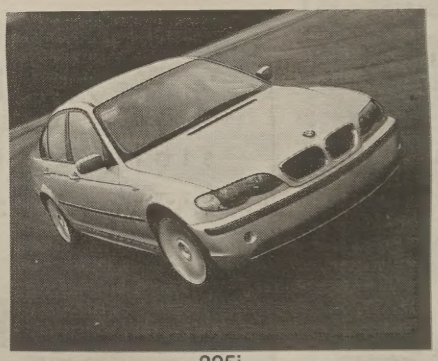

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MIDTOWN
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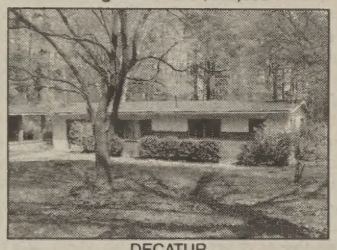
Doug Blanchard $382,000

MIDTOWN
Luxurious 3BR/2.5BA cluster home has all the bells and whistles!
Allen Bright $399,900



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Charming 3BR/1BA expanded brick & frame ranch on large level lot
Ann Hudson $184,900

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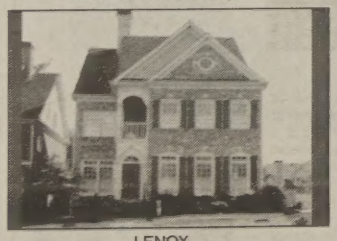
Enjoy amazing downtown views from your double front porches in this 3BR/3BA home
Ed Woods $256,900



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local news

Students share ideas across campuses

STUDENT SUMMIT, continued from Page 25

faculty, staff and students who won't go there. We want to help every college or university become a place were all people feel comfortable being openly gay."

Joyce came up with the concept for the summit this fall after organizing a successful meeting between gay Atlanta leaders and Kennesaw students, faculty and staff.

The summit "will give our students a chance to see how other groups deal with their own organizational challenges," Joyce said.

Nathan Woodling, co-president of Emory Pride, said thankfully there aren't many challenges left for gay people at Emory University, a private school in Decatur. Emory has a full-time paid staff for its very active Office of Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual Life, a long-standing gay-inclusive non-discrimination policy, and it was the first college in the state to offer domestic partner benefits.

Still, Woodling said he definitely plans to attend the summit.

"It's great to hear other people's stories and see how their groups have done well on other campuses," he said.

Scott McRae, president of Pride at Georgia Tech, said he and several students from his group are also excited about going.

With about 50 active members, McRae said Pride meets bi-weekly and the group's week of events centered around National Coming Out Day in October seems to get bigger every year. But he said that there still is work to be done for gay students and faculty at his school, and a summit like the one at Kennesaw is a great way to learn from other students.

"The summit sounds like a really cool event," McRae said. "We've done some networking in the past with Emory's group and it's great to be able to brainstorm ideas with students from other campuses."

MORE INFO

LGBT Student Organization Summit
April 26, 1 p.m. Networking social, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Kennesaw State University
1000 Chastain Rd., Kennesaw
Contact Teresa Joyce:
770-423-6406
tjoyce@kennesaw.edu

Passover celebration includes 'chocolate seder'

HOLY WEEK, continued from Page 27

But after five years of self-reflection and bar hopping, Stevens found a home at the gay-friendly Metropol-tan Community Church in San Diego, where she got involved with a singing group.

"I came to myself and then I came into an MCC church ... I thought it would be a less smoky version of a bar," she said.

Since Stevens' start in the MCC singing group, she rose again to national acclaim in the Christian community, as the only major out lesbian singer on the contemporary Christian music scene.

She pioneered the way for popular non-gay artists such as Amy Grant, Sandi Patty and Margaret Becker, according to the Encyclopedia of Contemporary Christian Music, sold in Bible bookstores across the country.

The encyclopedia honors Stevens as "the mother of contemporary Christian Music," saying that as "the progenitor of ... the single most popular genre in the contemporary Christian music market," other female contemporary Christian musicians "sing in her shadow."

Now Stevens travels the country with her partner and their dogs to sing her songs.

"I live in an RV on the road, on tour over 300 days a year," she said.

Stevens performs a new theme song every year at the MCC General conference. Since coming out of the closet, she set up a record label, Born Again Lesbian Music, and recorded 11 solo albums and a concert video.

Her current tour stops by Atlanta's Christ Covenant MCC for a concert performance on April 19 during Holy Week, the last week of Lent beginning with Palm Sunday and ending the day before Easter. Stevens will also sing the special music on Easter morning at the sunrise service and the 11 a.m. service.

In observance of Holy Week, Christ Covenant MCC joins several other gay-friendly congregations in the area with special services for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday.

According to Bible scripture, Jesus arrived in Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, was betrayed by Judas on Thursday, was crucified on Friday, rested on Saturday and rose from the dead on Sunday.

Services in line with the different days will be offered at Virginia-Highland Church, Christ Covenant MCC, First MCC, All Saints' Episcopal Church, and Unity North Atlanta Church, among others.

The same week, gay Jews will gather in Atlanta to celebrate Passover. Beginning on day 15 of the Jewish month Nissan, Passover is an eight-day observance commemorating the freedom and exodus of Jewish slaves from Egypt during the rule of Pharaoh Ramses II. The story of Passover is traditionally told at lavish dinners called seders.

Congregation Bet Haverim, a Reconstructionist synagogue founded by gays, will offer two traditional Passover seders during the week, and one kid-friendly chocolate seder to teach children about Passover in a fun, non-traditional way.

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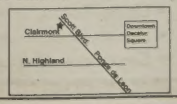

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Men Seeking Men

GOOD CATCH
WM, 50, 5'10", 165lbs, brown/brown, moustache, goatee, HIV+ but healthy, sincere, affectionate, masculine, loves the outdoors, landscaping, gardening. Hoping to meet a man, 38-53, with similar interests and qualities. Meansville ☎374135

SWEET AND INTELLIGENT
SM, 35, 6'4", 230lbs, brown complexion, sandy red hair, enjoys tv, movies, softball, cooking. Seeking special masculine man, to share friendship and fun. Atlanta ☎352761

HUGS & KISSES
Loving, caring, reserved, religious African-American male, 41, interested in starting LTR with African-American male, age open, for quiet times at home, lots of affection. ☎297574

SEEKING BLACK AND SEXY
SWM, 5'9", 170lbs, enjoys camping, singing, dancing, quiet evenings at home. Seeking BM, with similar interests, for friendship, or personal, private LTR. Athens ☎959039

CARING SWM...
tired of being alone. SWM, 6'3", 235lbs, brown/brown, HIV-, N/D, N/S, N/Drugs, Christian daddy bear, seeks Mr. Right, 25-45, for friendship, possible LTR. Atlanta ☎959083

FAT GUTS , CHARLESTON, SC
GWM, 49, 300lbs, likes other large men, age/race unimportant (though Japanese and redheads a+), for very physical wrestling, gut punches. Charleston ☎258743

DON'T PASS ME BY
GWM, 40, 6', 200lbs, with blue eyes, HIV+, is in search of a special man, for dating, leading to more. Atlanta ☎372443

LOVE, LIVE, LAUGH
SBM, 47, 6'2", 210lbs, is in search of monogamy with a wonderful man, who has a great sense of humor. Lawrenceville ☎376777

LET'S CONNECT
SWM, 18, 6'1", brown/blue, with good looks and a tan, seeks an outgoing guy for dining out and more. Marietta ☎378075

LET'S HAVE FUN
Male, 19, Cancer, 5'9", 145lbs, seeks SWM, 18-33, for casual fun times. ☎364790

HELLO THERE
Employed, honest SM, 31, seeks outgoing, loving man, to share friendship and lots of fun, possible LTR. Wrens ☎360818

LET'S TALK
SM, 32, well-built, masculine, good-looking, outgoing, fun, seeks average, down-to-earth guy, to share sports, friendship and more. Decatur ☎350698

SIMPLE PLEASURES
SWM, 55, loves dining, walks in the park, Broadway shows, bowling, softball games, and travel. Seeking a man to share these pleasures with. Knoxville ☎375986

GOOD COMPANY
SWM, 22, 6', with dark hair and good looks, seeks a man who is masculine, muscular, for fun times and more. Atlanta ☎370298

COMMON GROUND
SWM, 43, HIV+, healthy, Virgo, smoker, seeks same in a WM, 37-47, smoker, Atlanta area, for LTR. Clarkston ☎347566

FRIENDSHIP
GWM, 35, 5'11", 154lbs, brown/brown, enjoys reading, walks, quiet evenings, clubbing, movies, dining out. Seeking settled, mature, intelligent GM, with similar interests, for friendship and more. Beech Island ☎343379

LAID-BACK, MASCULINE GUY
WM, 26, 6', 185lbs, brown/blue, works out, likes the beach, travel, walks in the park, sports. Looking for fit, good-looking guy, 18-35, for dating. Jefferson ☎268867

NEW TO AREA
SBM, 36, 232lbs, black/brown, enjoys reading, sports, travel, dining out, movies, music. Seeking outgoing GM, with similar interests, for LTR. Atlanta ☎257245

LOOKING FOR LOVE
Tall, slender, shy SWM, 30, Sagittarius, smoker, enjoys the outdoors, seeks WM, 35-55, smoker, possible LTR. ☎365763

MISSISSIPPI MAN
This GWM, 33, brown/brown, top, Scorpio, smoker, seeks a WM, 35-50, smoker, for companionship. ☎261865

GREAT PERSON TO BE AROUND
Clean-shaven SWM, 37, D/D-free, in good shape, seeks older gentleman, 45+, for friendship first, maybe more. He should enjoy the simple things in life. Fayetteville St Mall ☎254793

LET'S MEET
Educated, artistic SBM, 48, Scorpio, N/S, enjoys painting, seeks man, 30-55, N/S, possible relationship. ☎366955

HOPELESS ROMANTIC
SM, 38, 5'9", 165lbs, blond/blue, goatee, D/D-free, sincere and honest, enjoys rollerblading, cycling, hiking, tennis, long walks. Seeking SM, who enjoys some of the same, for friendship, dating, LTR. Atlanta ☎354840

LET'S TALK
Fit, energetic SM, 40s, chef, enjoys reading, cycling, playing basketball and working out. Seeking outgoing, active guy, to share friendship and fun. Atlanta ☎351198

ARE YOU THE ONE
SM, 44, 5'4", 125lbs, brown complexion, enjoys basketball, football, swimming, gymnastics, track. Seeking very masculine fun-loving, active SM, to share scifi flicks, dining out, friendship and fun. discretion a must. Macon ☎349854

SEEKS THE RIGHT ONE
Mature, educated, caring, down-to-earth, fun, funny, spiritual, stable, loyal SBM, 32, N/S, black/brown, stocky build, 5'9", 215lbs, seeks SM, 20-39. Macon ☎324955

GIVE ME A CALL
SBM, 32, black/brown, beard, moustache, likes cooking, singing, reading, biking, movies, quiet times at home. Looking for someone special who is honest. Macon ☎273595

WARM AND SINCERE
Outgoing GBPM, 44, 5'7", 165lbs, honest, masculine, enjoys movies, sports, travel, cultural events, quiet evenings. Seeking mature GBPM, 32-50, for LTR. Austell ☎335776

SENSE OF DIRECTION
Seeking stable Caucasian man. Attractive BM, 31, 5'10", 170lbs, seeks good-looking, masculine WM, 25-40, for friendship and possibly more. Prefer N/S. Atlanta ☎304127

HOPELESS ROMANTIC
African-American male, 6', 185lbs, with a lot of pride, loves intimacy, quality time, long walks, and romance. Looking for employed, "out", dependable, self-sufficient B/HM, not into games. ☎294354

ON THE SAME LEVEL
Healthy, versatile GBM, 37, 5'10", 130lbs, slender build, HIV+, wears glasses, bald head, goatee, enjoys movies, quiet times, cooking, baking. Seeking honest, outgoing GM, 30-45, N/S, preferably HIV+. ☎294677

DARK CHOCOLATE
Smooth GBM, 38, 6', 170lbs, dark complexion, musician and government employee, looking to meet nice, feminine man, 30-45, who wants to be treated well. ☎302849

VERY ATTRACTIVE AND...
masculine SBPM, 6'2", 225lbs, bald by choice, works out, outgoing, caring, looking for someone, 24-55, I can settle down with a develop a serious relationship. Lake City ☎279368

HOME-MAKER
GBM, late 30s Androgynous-looking bottom, HIV+ and very-healthy, loves house-work, cooking, cleaning, ironing, and a barber. Seeking average guy, top, who needs love. Race unimportant. Atlanta ☎959057

Women Seeking Women

COLLEGE STUDENT
GWF, 34, enjoys movies, reading, dining out, travel, sports, biking. Seeking GF, with similar interests, for companionship and more. Atlanta ☎341420

LOOKING FOR LOVE
Attractive, feminine, professional GBF, 39, enjoys concerts, plays, quiet dinners, cuddling, and occasional evenings out on the town. Seeking sincere, loving, butch GWPF with similar interests. Powder Springs ☎959135

STAY SWEET!
Full-figured SWF, 29, new to Atlanta area, fun, outgoing, straight-forward, down-to-earth, independent, lives alone, seeks SW/BF, for companionship, good conversation, walks, exploring life together. D/D-free. ☎296039

SOMEONE TO CALL MY OWN
GBF, 21, 139lbs, looking for a female, 23-39, with good personality, who likes movies, having fun, going out, and knows what she wants out of life. Atlanta ☎111205

WAITING TO EXHALE
BF, 5'8", long brown/brown, of large frame, telecommunications customer service representative, loves college football, basketball, and travel. Seeking woman for committed relationship. Atlanta ☎959061

GREAT CATCH!
GBPF, 24, seeks SF for friendship, possibly more. I am attractive, feminine, active. Seeking stable, D/D-free lady to enjoy life with. Atlanta ☎959126

HOPELESS ROMANTIC
Female, 27, 5'3", 190lbs, long brown/hazel, loves watching football and occasional tennis, enjoys writing poems and short stories. Seeking friend, possibly more. Bloomingdale ☎959098

SAVE THE DRAMA!
Brown-skinned woman, 45, 5'7", 186lbs, smoker, looking for a special lady, 34-41, race open, to spend time. Not looking for a lot of drama! ☎317653

OLDER WISER LESBIANS
Can we start a support/social group for the above in North Fulton County? Is anyone out there? If interested and would like to get involved, please call. Alpharetta ☎959093

WANT THE REAL THING
This WF, 30, likes the outdoors, spending time with my dog, hanging out with friends, reading. Looking for a woman with similar interests. Must be mature and emotionally available. Decatur ☎274026

BE MINE
Attractive, feminine, hip GWF, 29, spiritual, adventurous, loves fashion, art. Looking for love outside the box. Memorial Square ☎262497

SHORT AND SEXY
GPF, 34, enjoys movies, music, travel, working out, outdoor activities. Seeking B/HF, 28-40, with similar interests, for friendship first. Stone Mountain ☎250845

ONCE MORE...
with feeling. GWF seeks same. Please be 36-44, fit, attractive, intelligent, spiritual, emotionally available. Let's meet, talk and see where it goes. Tucker ☎114424

MATURE SOPHISTICATE
BF, 55, mature sophisticate, seeks same in professional BF to share dining, movies, travel, cultural events and comfortable home life, some discretion required. Stone Mountain ☎959099

Just Friends

WANTED FRIENDS
GWPF, mid-30s, seeks similar, 25-40, for friends. Enjoys arts, travel, outdoors, sports, music of all types. I enjoy watching movies at home and out, good conversations, sincerity. No drugs. ☎258934

FRIENDSHIP IS THE ROOT...
to all relationships. Female looking for a friend(s) to enjoy Atlanta and life with. Let's watch movies at home or get out and explore the town. Decatur ☎117471

TV/TS

LOOK NO FURTHER!
SM, 43, 6'1", 175lbs, dark complexion, in search of TS/TV for friendship or more. Leave me a message! Blue Ridge ☎110103

Been Glanced ?

TARRAZU SUN. FEB 9TH
You: very hot, Asian-looking guy on first date. Me: with friends, sitting across from you. We made eye contact couple times. Wanted to give you my number, didn't have opportunity. ☎288931

GLANCED AT COWTIPPERS
Me: Red baseball cap, red sweatshirt. You: hooded gray sweatshirt, in the company of a lady. Wanted to approach you, didn't know how. Give me a call! Atlanta ☎251088

BRUSH STROKES 1/19
You: very handsome, muscular, shaved head, glasses, in magazine section. Me: dark hair, sunglasses, black turtleneck. Exchanged glances. Too shy to speak, wish i had. Coffee? ☎113084

WHITE BUTTONFLY JEANS...
and red top that you wore so well a the Ansley Kroger Sunday, Jan.15 at 1 p.m. Can't get you out of my mind!! Atlanta ☎117288

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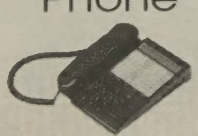
SoVo Connections

How do you want us to contact you?

Phone



Choose any phone number, home, office or your cellular phone!

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Text message sent on your digital pager or on your cell phone.

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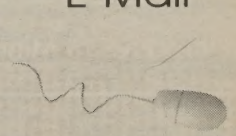

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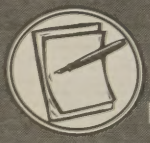

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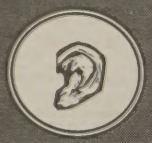


Leave messages for those that intrigue you

Have a great date!

Guidelines: Southern Voice personals are for adults 18 or over seeking long-term monogamous relationships. To ensure your safety, carefully screen all responses. First meetings should always occur in a public place. Abbreviations are permitted only to indicate gender preference, race and religion. We suggest your ad contain a self-description, age range, lifestyle and avocations. Ads and voice messages containing explicit sexual language will not be accepted. This publication reserves the right to revise copy containing objectionable phrases, to reject in its sole discretion any advertisement on account of its text. An advertiser's print ad may be renewed on the date the corresponding voice greeting box expires or thereafter. This publication assumes no responsibility for the content or reply to any Southern Voice ad. The advertiser assumes complete liability for the content and all replies to any advertisement or recorded message, and for all claims made against this publication and its agents as a result thereof. The advertiser agrees to indemnify and hold this publication, its employees and its agents harmless from all costs, expenses (including reasonable attorney fees), liabilities and damages resulting from or caused by the publication or recording placed by the advertiser or any reply to any such advertisement. By using Southern Voice, the advertiser agrees not to leave his/her phone number, last name, or address in his/her voice greeting. Not all boxes contain voice greetings.

CLASSIFIEDS

Deadline to place a classified ad for Friday's publication is Monday at 5:30 p.m.

REAL ESTATE SERVICES

IF LIFE IS A BEACH shouldn't you be a part of it? MEYER REAL ESTATE. Paul Cain, Meyer Sales Associate. (800) 824-6331 / (251) 968-2951 / (251) 978-6061 (c) / e-mail: PCain@MeyerRE.com / 1585 Gulf Shore Pkwy; PO Box 3609, Gulf Shores, AL, 36547.

Coastal Connection, LLC
REALTY GROUP

RATED # 1 BEACH IN THE U.S. Apalachicola, Cape San Blas, Indian Pass, St. George Island. Homes/lots for sale! Call Stanton Ward or Robby Payton toll free (866) 653-1800. "Get Connected" www.thecoastalconnection.com.

FORT LAUDERDALE, FL Come buy in the "Land of Sunshine". From the top producer, #1 gay realtor in the area. Let my 15yrs of experience work for you. #8 agent in state of FL in 2002. Dan O'Flaherty (954) 396-5965.

JUST RENOVATED CONDO w/ 1 BR, 1 BA, LR, kit, next to MARTA @ Linbergh. Cable & water incl. Laundry facilities in building. Pool. Call (770) 277-0769.

OPEN HOUSE / ATL

BROOKHAVEN Fabulous 4/3 renovation. Perfect for entertaining. See atchrealestate.net for details or call Dave (404) 325-3660.

DECATUR / AVONDALE OPEN HOUSE Sat/Sun 1-6pm. Builder Closeout. Dream model home w/priv courtyard, 2 story stone tile foyer, designer kit, dramatic MB, BA w/oversized jetted-tub & massive walk-in closets. Mid $200's. Swim/tennis/lake & park. Tim Reed, (404) 246-9568. John Friedline, (404) 786-9258, MORRIS & RAPER CONDO DEPOT, EHO.

SALE / FULTON

8 FABULOUS HOMES For sale in Atlanta! Don't miss out!
✔Chosewood Park: 2/1, precious starter home in up & coming neighborhood! Lrg fenced yard, priv deck, hdwds, recently renovated. All systems new. Tiled BA & kit! $125,500.
✔Grant Park: 3/2, Lrg rooms, hdwd flrs, very clean, beautiful white fenced front yard w/ char,. $229,900.
✔Lakewood: 3/1 adorable craftsman bungalow on huge lot. Fpl, lots of windows, priv gardens w/ pond, gleaming hdwd flrs. $128,900.
✔Grant Park: 3/2.5 2 car drive under garage. Newer 2 story w/ wonderful details. Paneled office, full bsmnt w/ bonus room & storage. $319,900.
✔Ormewood Park: 2/2 designer revon w/ great flow. Priv landscaped yard. $198,900.
✔Grant Park: 2/2 Victorian bungalow. Complete renov. 2 blks from park. $255,000.
✔Grant Park: 3/2 wonder renov. Victorian bungalow w/ character near park/shops. Granite & stainless steel kit, hdwd flrs, priv yard! $299,900.
✔Grant Park: 3/2.5 open flr plan, skyline views from 2nd flr balcony. Fresh paint in/out. $299,500.
Contact McKay, Keller Williams (404) 314-7568 or www.mckayteam.com.

ADAIR PARK (740 Lillian Ave) The park is TRULY your front yard in this cute 2/1 bungalow featuring refurbished hdwd flrs, high ceilings, skylight in kit, lrg BRs, sunroom. $120,000. Shontel (404) 550-1554 **REAL ESTATE INVESTMENTS, LLC**

DOWNTOWN / EDGEWOOD AVE CORRIDOR Brushworks Lofts, Atl's Best Loft Value. As featured in the Wall Street Journal. Big 2 story, 1 & 2 BR lofts in terrific historic bldg. Hdwds, exposed masonry, some spiral stairs, skylights, roof deck. Lofts offer assigned, controlled access prkg. 1 BR from $149,000; 2 BR from $167,500 + a big property tax break. Directions: From N, 75/85 south to Jesse Hill Dr exit, L on Edgewood, under hwy, 2nd property on R. From S, 75/85 to Edgewood exit, turn R, 2nd property on R. (404) 992-0835.

EAST POINT SEMMES PARK (2430 Hillcrest) Pamper yourself w/this remarkable 2 BR, 1 BA renovation on one of the quietest streets in town! Lrg level lot. $154,900. C-21 HOLLEY REALTY, Kirk Hill (404) 636-0313 ext36.

PRIDE REALTY CONDO FOR SALE BUCKHEAD TERRACES AT PEACHTREE; 1 Biscayne Dr. 30309.
✔2 BR / 2 BA Buckhead condo. Many upgrades. $184,900.
✔1 BR / 1.5 BA Buckhead condo. Many upgrades. $169,900.
PRIDE REALTY (404) 352-5570.
www.PrideRealty.com

VA HIGHLANDS LOFT! Sleek, stylish 1 BR, 1 BA! Gorgeous gourmet kit w/ Corian, stainless, luxury BA w/ garden tub, beautiful hdwd & concrete flrs, exposed brick, huge flood windows w/ light. Walk to Whole Foods! Deeded space, low fees. $229,500. Glen Iris, Patti Junger, Coldwell Banker (404) 504-0801.

SALE / DEKALB

BROOKHAVEN (PRICED TO SELL) Modern TH. 2 BR, 2.5 BA, view of downtown. Agents protected. $286,000. (404) 277-6430. Owner

DECATUR OPEN Sun 2-5pm. Charming 2 BR, 1 BA bungalow near Winnona Pk/Seminary. Total renovation. BEAUTIFUL! $179,900 AGTS protected 1460 Catherine (404) 378-5756.

***PINE LAKE* Wonderful 3 BR, 2 BA home w/lake view in GREAT neighborhood. Lrg eat-in kit. Gorgeous landscaping. Clubhouse, beachhouse, park, playground & tennis. Close to shopping & Marta. $169,900. Ken Carroll, (404) 246-2922, CENTURY 21 GOLD MEDAL REALTY.**

PINE LAKE 3 BR, 2 BA cottage on corner lot. Separate Dining &Living w/ lrg fpl. Walk to lake, beachouse, park, tennis, playground & clubhouse. $165,000. Ken Carroll, (404) 246-2922, CENTURY 21 GOLD MEDAL REALTY.

RAINBOW ESTATES (2709 Stardust Trl) Open Sun 4/13, 2-5pm. Spacious 4 BR, 2.5 BA brick tri-level w/vinyl trim. Lrg formal LR, sunken DR, gourmet friendly kit open to FR w/view to 16x32 inground pool. Virgin hdwds, lrg laundry room, bonus basement area. Family friendly n'hood, easy walk to Marta bus stops, close to schools,church, daycare & Y. $147K. CENTURY 21 A & L REALTY (404) 292-1150. Stop by & Buy!

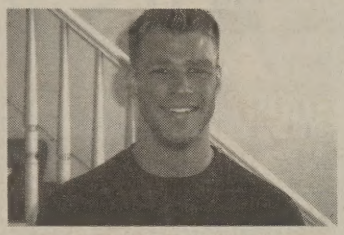
RIDGELAND PARK 3 BR, 2 BA all brick bungalow in nice neighborhood. Separate Dining/Living w/ fpl. 1 car garage & lrg lot w/priv backyard. Close to everything. Must see! $279,900. Ken Carroll, (404) 246-2922, CENTURY 21 GOLD MEDAL REALTY.

SALE / COMMERCIAL

DREAM BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY Owner of Key West's thriving GLBT publication --Celebrate! -- is shifting business priorities. Beautiful 32-page 4-color every other week paper bills $250,000/yr, is debt free & currently operating at profit. Asking price for right buyer is just $50,000. Contact publisher@watermarkonline.com.

SALE / ELSEWHERE

ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA Secluded mountain-top land 5 min from downtown. 1.43 acres-$140k; 1.16 acres-$129k; OR BOTH $250k. (828) 251-2449 or sholman56@yahoo.com.



TO SELL YOUR HOME, YOU HAVE TO LIST IT
Call **SOUTHERN VOICE** to list your property & take advantage of the sellers market! Call Tim @ (877) 863-1885 ext 223.

WANTED TO BUY

SILVER KEY PROPERTIES INC ISO nice houses to lease & buy in the Atlanta area. (678) 318-3556. 24/hr recorded message. www.e-SilverKey.Com

WE BUY LAND + LOTS Any size, any area. Quick cash. (404) 627-4568.

RENTAL SERVICES

PRIDE REALTY GAY RENTALS A current list of the most desirable living addresses in Atlanta. Please call Jason Levine (404) 352-5570.
✔CORNER STONE VILLAGE LOFTS (6th & P'Tree) 2 BR, 2 BA dream! A must see. WD incl. $1,395/mo
✔COLONY PARK (209 14th ST, 30309) 1 BR, 1 BA, WD, assigned prkg. $850/mo.
✔CENTENNIAL PARK WEST Huge 1 BR PALACE all new, hdwd, WD, jacuzzi, balc, garage, concierge, many extras. $1,300/mo.
✔FREEDOM HEIGHTS (821 Ralph McGill Blvd, 30306) 1 BR, 1 BA, WD incl. $895/mo.
✔13TH ST high rise 1 BR, balc, garage, WD. $875/mo.
✔P'TREE BATTLE 1 BR furn condo. (2285 P'Tree) $900/mo incl all.
✔TERRACES AT PEACHTREE (1 Biscayne Dr 30309) 1 BR, 1.5 BA, many upgrades. $995/mo. 2 br, 2 BA. $1,300/mo.
✔**CHAMBLEE 3 BR, 3 BA HOME** (2760 Stewart Ct, 30340) 2-car garage, fenced yard, all new interior, fpl. $1,495/mo.
"Proudly committed to our Atlanta community"
www.PrideRealty.com. (404) 352-5570. No fee service.

INTOWN HOMES FOR RENT Section 8/Housing Choice OK.
✔1062 White Oak: Lrg 2/1, west end, high ceilings, hdwd flrs, 4 deco fpl, yard, $1,050/mo.
✔2084 Bethel Dr: 4/2 at end of quiet st, inside features brand new renov. $1,200/mo.
✔1992 Compton Dr: 3/2, hdwd flrs, yard public park, walk to Lakewood Amphitheater. $1,100/mo.
WD in all. Shontel (404) 550-1554 **REAL ESTATE INVESTMENTS, LLC**

LUXURY RENTALS In Midtown!
✔197 5th St: 2/3 TH, rooftop terrace & more. $1,700/mo.
✔774 Piedmont Ave #5: 2/2.5 TH, garage & upgrades galore. $1,850/mo.
✔Cotting Ct #109; 2/2 condo, fitness ctr, pool & more. $1,950/mo.
✔870 Argonne Ave: 2/1 TH, brand new kit, backyard. $1,200/mo.
✔1231 Woodland Ave #3: 2/2 condo, pool, big LR & kit. $1,200/mo.
Contact us at Atlanta Intown Real Estate Svcs (404) 874-6296 or www.RandalandDavid.com.

Robin Cahall 14 West Realty (404) 874-6357 x 226. Preview all our properties on our website ('property-consultants.com')
✔**Inman Park**- 2 BR, 1 BA, hdwd flrs, 1st flr unit, walk to Inman Marta Station. $775/mo.
✔**Inman Park**- Historic building, spacious 3 BR, 2 BA, high ceilings, hdwd flrs, all big rooms, pool. $1,500/mo.
✔**Inman Park**- 1 BR, 1 BA, hdwd flrs, 2nd flr unit, walk to Inman Marta Station. $600/mo.
✔**Lenox/Phipps**- Lrg, spacious TH, 2 BR, 1.5 BA, dining room, refinished hdwds. $850/mo.
✔**Midtown**- 1 BR, 1 BA, 2nd flr unit in 4 unit bldg, hdwd flrs, plenty of closet space, eat-in kit. $625/mo.
✔**Midtown**- Lrg 1 BR, 1 BA, 4 unit bldg, hdwd flrs, plenty of closet space, eat-in kit. $700/mo.
✔**Poncey/Highlands**- Lrg studio apt over garage, storage available, $650/mo.

Condos/Townhomes for Rent
✔**Druid Hills**- Spacious TH, 3 BR, 2.5 BA, entry foyer, sunken living room, sep dining, patio, white kit w/ corian tops, 2 reserved spaces. $1,500/mo.

GARY S CHAD 14 West Realty (404) 874-6357 x 207. Preview all our properties on our website ('property-consultants.com')
✔**Buckhead** - Spacious 4 BR, 2 BA, family room, sunroom, fpl, separate dining, garage. $1,500/mo.
✔**Candler Park** - Cottage, 3 BR, 2 BA, separate dining, sunroom/office, den, deck, nice backyard. $1,650/mo.
✔**Clairmont/Northlake** - Lrg 3 BR, 2.5 BA, recreational room, fpl, secluded hilltop setting. $1,400/mo.
✔**Decatur** - Lrg brick ranch w/ finished lower level, 4 BR, 3 BA, fpl, family room, quiet street., $1,900/mo.
✔**Emory/Druid Hills** - Brick ranch, ,3 BR, 2 BA, sunroom, deck, quiet setting. $1,600/mo.
✔**Emory/Druid Hills** - Charming cottage, 3 BR, 2 BA, renovated kit, open to family room, deck, quiet setting. $1,800/mo.
✔**Emory/Druid Hills** - Brick ranch on hilltop, 2 BR, 2 BA, family room, sunroom, patio. $1,400/mo.
✔**Loring Heights** - Renovated cottage, 2 BR (master suite), 2 BA, den, deck. $1,250/mo.
✔**Midtown** - Renovated bungalow, 2 BR, 2 BA, music room, dining room, garage. $1,600/mo.
✔**Morningside** - Small 2 BR, 1 BA, living room, large screen porch, quiet street. $1,100/mo.
✔**Toco Hills** - Split level, 4 BR, 2 BA, separate dining, sunroom w/ french doors to deck. $1,400/mo.

RENT / GWINNETT

US 29 / PLEASANT HILL TH, 2 BR, 2.5 BA. New carpet & tile! (678) 428-4902 or www.e-silverkey.com.

RENT / FULTON

100% RENOVATION! 3 BR, 1.5 BA, new appls, all elec, 2 car drive, 5 min to downtown, near stadium. $1,300/mo. Avail 4/7. Rainey (404) 246-4583.

ATLANTA RENTALS Pride Realty. Ansley/Midtown. Specializing in Metro Atlanta.
✔Studio $525 & up mo (Midtown)
✔1 BR $575 & up mo (Midtown)
✔2 BR, 2 BA garden $749/mo
✔3 BR, 2 BA garden $890/mo.
✔1 BR, Roswell, furn w/ skylights $125/wk.
✔BUCKHEAD PENTHOUSE 3 BR, 2 BA, WD, garage, $1,659/mo.
"Because There's No Place Like Home." Pride Realty.com (We Are a NO FEE Service) (404) 352-5570.

BROOKHAVEN (2328 Burch Cir) 3 BR, 1.5 BA ranch. Seperate den, huge fenced in backyard. $1,200/mo. (404) 874-6296. www.RandalandDavid.com or www.AtlantaIntown.com.

BROOKHAVEN / BUFORD HIGHWAY 1, 2 & 3 BRs @ bus stop, near shopping, employment! All brick, ceramic tile, porches, WD connections, mature trees & lots of windows. **Epic Gardens,** (404) 633-1798. Visit: EpicResidential.com

BUCKHEAD / LENOX HEIGHTS condo for lease. Gated community, 2 BR, 2 BA, DR, covered prkg, pool, tennis, new stainless appliances, WD, great roommate plan. $1,375/mo. (404) 293-5895.

EAST PACES FERRY condo for lease. Gated community, 2 BR, 1 BA, DR, assigned prkg, pool, landscaped courtyard, newly-renov, hdwd flrs, all-new stainless appliances, WD, corian counters, 2nd BR, also perfect for office / study. $1,200/mo. (404) 467-8969.

GRANT PARK New Construction. Great location. 2 BR, 1 BA (poss 2 BA) lrg Master Suite, stained glass, hrdwds, huge wrap porch, WD, DW, disp, CHA. $1,200/mo + sec dep. Avail 5/1. (404) 624-1825.

GRANT PARK / ORMEWOOD 888 Ormewood Ave: *Half off 1st mo rent!* 1 BR, 1 BA in duplex, CHA, WD hookups, custom kit, hdwd. Walk to the park & East Atlanta Village. $750/mo. (404) 377-1507.

INMAN PARK Charming 3 BR house, WD, hdwds, fenced yard, pets OK. Near Virgina's restaurant. $1,450/mo. (404) 681-1069.

INMAN PARK (584 Highland Ave) Lease purchase/rent to own. No bank qualifying. 3 BR, 2 full BA, hdwd flrs, back parking. By owner. (678) 560-9232 or (404) 932-7493.

METROPOLIS PENTHOUSE LOFT pool, fitness, concierge, clubroom, hdwd flrs, 12' ceilings, stainless steel appls, prkg, terrace. $1,550/mo. **Todd, (404) 822-0230.**

MIDTOWN (691 Durant Pl) 1 BR apt, hdwd flrs, fpl, screened porch, OSP, enclosed back yard, WD connections, lrg LR & DR, small office space. $775/mo. Call (404) 325-0738 / (404) 724-0753 / (678) 360-8390 (c).

CLASSIFIEDS

MIDTOWN Lrg duplex, 2-3BR, 1 BA, lrg LR w/ fpl, DR, eat-in-kit, hdwds, WD, DW, CAC, deck, screend porch, OSP, 2 blks to park. $1,350/mo. (404) 374-2416.

MIDTOWN Most desirable 1 BR condo building in Metropolis. 17th flr offers great view, new appls & fabulous amenities. (404) 808-8308.

MORNINGSIDE Recently renovated furnished 1,600 sqft 2 BR, 1.5 BA Carriage house. WD, trash compactor, skylight, LR w/patio over pool. Garage & sec sys. $1,800/mo + utils. (843) 364-5433.

PRIDE REALTY METRO ATLANTA LOFTS. Great secured Midtown locations.
✔ 1 BRs from $699/mo & up
✔ 2 BRs, 2 BA from $799/mo & up
www.PrideRealty. com
(404) 352-5570. (We Are a NO FEE Service).

UNIQUE LOFT SPACE/a Industrial/retro 1200 sqft, WD, DW, AC, secured covered prkg, full BA. $1,050/mo incl utils. (404) 229-7232.

RENT / DEKALB

BRIARCLIFF RD 2 BR, 1 BA, full kit, cable, WD, priv access, basement apt. Located 10 min from Midtown, Decatur, Emory & Buckhead. $900/mo utils incl. (404) 406-4354.

CANDLER PK / LSP (1370 Iverson) Lrg 1 BR, 1 BA, CHA, WD. 1 blk to MARTA Station. $750/mo. No pets. (404) 525-3024.

CHARMING HISTORIC RENTALS
Half off 1st mo rent!
Walk to restaurants & shops.
✔620 W College Ave: 1 BR, 1 BA duplex in Decatur, CHA, WD, Custom kit, hdwds. $850/mo.
✔300 Oxford Pl: Studio apt in triplex in Candler Park. CHA, WD. $650/mo. (404) 377-1507.

DECATUR / AVONDALE Newly renovated 2 BR, 1 BA walk to Marta. Must see! $995/mo. (770) 439-3594.

DECATUR HISTORIC DISTRICT! Renovated 5 BR, 3 BA, Gourmet kit, hdwds, fpl, built-in bookcases. Pets negotiable. Walk to Square. Great for roommates or family. $2,500/mo. (404) 790-6961.

EAST ATL (1904 BRAEBURN CIR) Rent or purchase 3/2 (2/2 w/ den). Lots of space, high ceilings, hdwd flrs, jacuzzi, separate 2 person shower, double vanity, walk in closet the size of a BR, alarm, prkg, huge deck, storage in walk in crawl space, priv fenced yard, pets OK. Quiet st, great neighbors. Walk to village on good day. $1,385/mo. $2,500 refundable dep. Shontel (404) 550-1554.**REAL ESTATE INVESTMENTS, LLC**

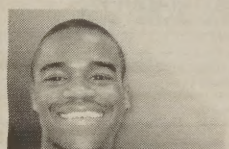
PLACE YOUR
CLASSIFIED AD
AD ON THE WEB!
WWW.SOVO.COM
or call
1-877-863-1885

EAST ATL 4 BR, 1.5 BA brick ranch. Totally remodeled. LR/DR, kit, den, full basement, lrg deck. Near East Atl village. $1,200/ mo. (678) 777-6944.

EDGEWOOD Adorable 2 BR, 1 BA bungalow available 6/1 in friendly neighborhood. Cat/dog lovers welcome, lrg fenced-in yard, hdwds, spacious kit w/gas stove, DW, WD, porch, great natural light, walk to Candler Pk & LSP. Cool landlord won't raise rent. $1,150/mo. Call (404) 229-5399.

KIRKWOOD (2202 Hosea Williams Dr) Cute, renovated 1920's bungalow. 2 BR, 2 BA, open living space, big deck, 2 car garage. $1,250/mo. (404) 874-6296 or www.RandalandDavid.com. **Atlanta Intown Real Estate Svcs**

KIRKWOOD Gorgeous restored bungalow. Rent $995/mo. See pictures & details at www.laughingsunrenovations.com. (678) 595-0038.



THINK SMART!!...ADVERTISE IN SOUTHERN VOICE CLASSIFIEDS
Call Rodney to place your ad! (877) 863-1885 ext 247.

RENT / EVENT SPACE

FORUM AT DEFOOR CENTRE An intimate, artistic setting for events; 30' ceilings, large performance stage; accommodates 500 standing, 150 seated; 5 mins from Buckhead, Midtown, Downtown. Contact Shelly Crump, Event Sales Manager (404) 591-3903.

SHARE / GWINNETT

NORCROSS F ISO PGM, NS to shr beautiful 3 BR, 2 BA home. $450/ mo + 1/2 gas & elec. Refs/Dep. Call (404) 316-0619 or e-mail ddcater@mindspring.com.

SHARE / FULTON

ANSLEY PARK ISO GWM to shr a 2 BR condo w/ hdwd flrs, WD, back patio. Cable incl. & priv phone avail. Close to 85 & MARTA. $500/mo + utils. Call (404) 875-0531.

EAST ATLANTA / VILLAGE Roommate wanted for 2 BR, 2 BA ranch-style home. $500/mo utils incl. Dep req'd. (404) 277-0288.

EAST POINT 3 BR home. Priv RM w/ BA/phone/cable, WD, pool, all amens, MARTA, nice area. $550/mo + dep. Refs req'd. (404) 254-8546.

EAST POINT PGM, NS, seeking roommate to shr, 2BR, 1 BA home, own BR & office/LR, 4 blks from train station. $450/mo incl utils, refs required. No pets! (404) 768-2602

GRANT PARK 4 BD, 3 BA 3,000 sqft house, WD, GREAT attic! 1 blk from Park. ISO neat, NS, responsible roommate. $425/mo + 1/3 utils/cable. $300 dep. Dave (404) 221-1375.

GRANT PARK Roommate wanted for Edwardian on the Park. Shr BA & kit. $125/week + $100 dep. (404) 627-4794.

LAVISTA / CHESHIRE BRIDGE Avail 5/1. 3rd GM to shr 3 BR, 2 BA. Furnished except BR. WD, prkg, MARTA, more. Dog & cat. $450/mo. All inclusive except phone. No smoking. Chuck (404) 320-9629.

MIDTOWN / INMAN PARK Prof GM looking for 1 or 2 GMs to shr beautiful huge, renov house in historic district neighborhood. 11 ft ceilings, lrg mod kit, WD, pool, jacuzzi, OSP, no pets! Access to entire house. 1 person $585/mo + 1/2 utils / 2 persons (use of 1 BR) $850/mo + 2/3 utils / 2 persons (use of 2 BRs) $1,040/mo + 2/3 utils. (404) 569-7580

MIDTOWN GM, 30 seeks prof GM to shr 2 BR, 2.5 BA TH in great location. Lots of privacy. $675/mo + 1/2 elec. Call Mike (404) 872-0789.

SHARE / DEKALB

285 / PONCE-CLARKSTON GM Shr lrg priv home. Priv BR/ BA, dish, WD, phone, utils. NS/PETS. $440/mo + dep. (404) 298-0062.

AVONDALE / I-285 GM sharing lrg 4 BR, 2.5 BA house. CATV, DSL, garage, fenced back yard. Pets OK. Prefer NS. $350/ mo + utils. Call Gary (404) 294-9061 or e-mail to hond@mindspring.com.

BRIARCLIFF / NORTH DRUID HILLS Quiet, responsible GM to shr 2,100 sq ft TH w/ same. Garage, pool, CATV. 14'x29' BR, priv BA. $550/mo incl utils. NS. Refs. (404) 310-0398.

DECATUR GF seeking GF to shr 3 BR, 1 BA house. $600/mo + 1/2 utils. (404) 284-3104.

DECATUR RM avail in beautiful 3 BR / 2 BA home. $450/mo. Utils incl. Call Susan (770) 395-2546.

NORCROSS / DORAVILLE Shr 3 BR, 3.5 BA @ Peachtree Industrial Blvd & I-285. Lrg BR w/ priv BA on walk-in level in 3 level TH. $450/mo incl utils. (404) 788-1604.

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LIFE PARTNER COMMITMENT CEREMONIES performed by like-minded minister. Call Reverend Angelia Hall (770) 942-9744. Ask about small ceremony packages.

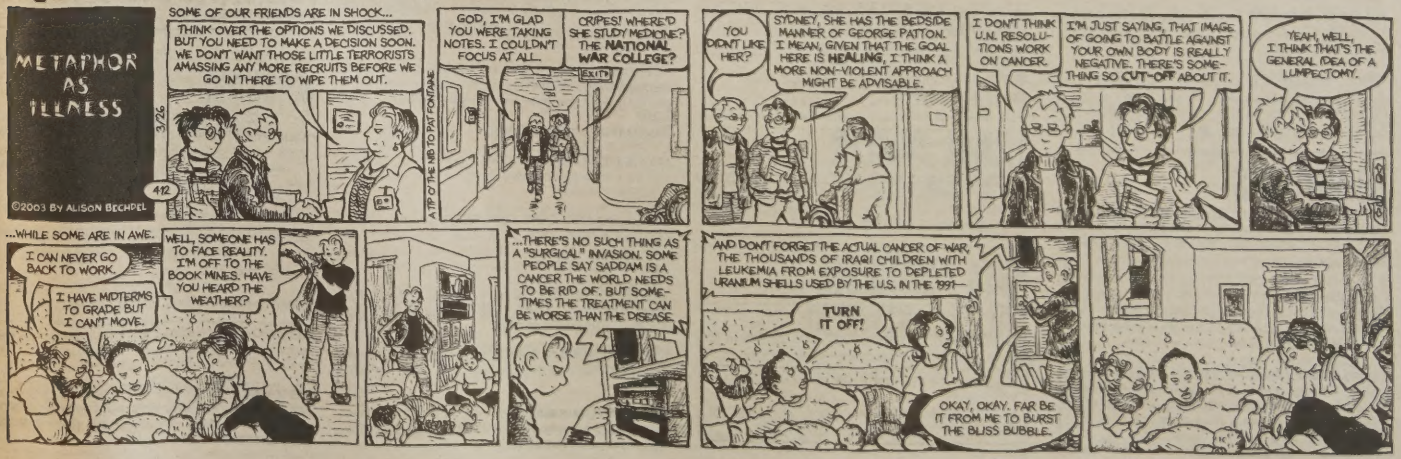
ANNOUNCE YOUR UNION The SoutheRN Voice is proud to announce the addition of a "Commitment Ceremonies" category to our Classified listings. When making arrangements for your Union, don't forget to include the most important aspect of all...announcing the date. *Publishing your union is easy & simple. Call (877) 863-1885 ext 223 to put the finishing touches on your ceremony.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***OUR COMMON WELFARE** will provide free HIV testing & counseling, testing using oral fluids & urine test; daily 9am-7pm & Sat 9am-1pm.. Located at 4329 Memorial Dr, Suite H; Decatur (next to Dekalb Co jail). Call (404) 296-3090 for details.*

Place Your Ad on the Web @ www.sovo.com

Dykes To Watch Out For by Alison Bechdel


METAPHOR AS ILLNESS
©2003 BY ALISON BECHDEL
SOME OF OUR FRIENDS ARE IN SHOCK...
THINK OVER THE OPTIONS WE DISCUSSED. BUT YOU NEED TO MAKE A DECISION SOON. WE DON'T WANT THOSE LITTLE TERRORISTS AMASSING ANY MORE RECRUITS BEFORE WE GO IN THERE TO WIPE THEM OUT.
3/26
412
A TIP O' THE HAT TO PAT FONTAINE
GOD, I'M GLAD YOU WERE TAKING NOTES. I COULDN'T FOCUS AT ALL.
CRIPES! WHERE'D SHE STUDY MEDICINE? THE NATIONAL WAR COLLEGE?
EXIT
YOU DIDN'T LIKE HER?
SYDNEY, SHE HAS THE BEDSIDE MANNER OF GEORGE PATTON. I MEAN, GIVEN THAT THE GOAL HERE IS HEALING, I THINK A MORE NON-VIOLENT APPROACH MIGHT BE ADVISABLE.
I DON'T THINK U.N. RESOLUTIONS WORK ON CANCER.
I'M JUST SAYING, THAT IMAGE OF GOING TO BATTLE AGAINST YOUR OWN BODY IS REALLY NEGATIVE. THERE'S SOMETHING SO CUT-OFF ABOUT IT.
YEAH, WELL, I THINK THAT'S THE GENERAL IDEA OF A LUMPECTOMY.
...WHILE SOME ARE IN AWE.
I CAN NEVER GO BACK TO WORK.
I HAVE MIDTERMS TO GRADE BUT I CAN'T MOVE.
WELL, SOMEONE HAS TO FACE REALITY. I'M OFF TO THE BOOK MINES. HAVE YOU HEARD THE WEATHER?
...THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A "SURGICAL" INVASION. SOME PEOPLE SAY SADDAM IS A CANCER THE WORLD NEEDS TO BE RID OF. BUT SOMETIMES THE TREATMENT CAN BE WORSE THAN THE DISEASE.
AND DON'T FORGET THE ACTUAL CANCER OF WAR. THE THOUSANDS OF IRAQI CHILDREN WITH LEUKEMIA FROM EXPOSURE TO DEPLETED URANIUM SHELLS USED BY THE U.S. IN THE '99—
TURN IT OFF!
OKAY, OKAY. FAR BE IT FROM ME TO BURST THE BLISS BUBBLE.

CLASSIFIEDS

BODY ELECTRIC RETURNS Many men feel it's one of the best things they have ever done for themselves. It's about relationships, self-acceptance, sex & spirituality, all done in a setting that is playful, safe & honoring. In Atlanta 5/3-5/4. Call Tony (404) 405-5651 for more info.

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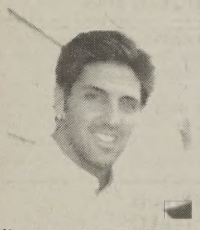

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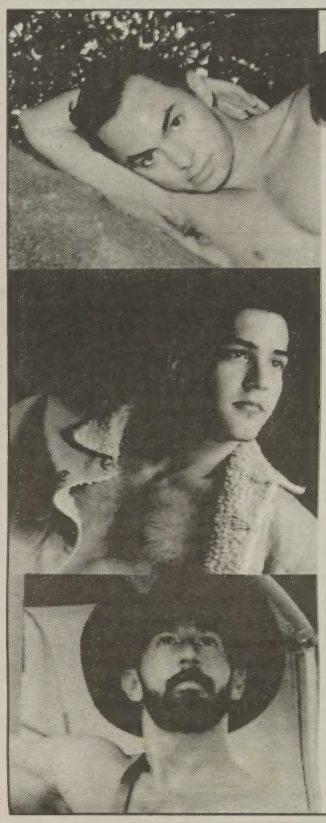

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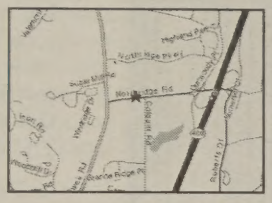

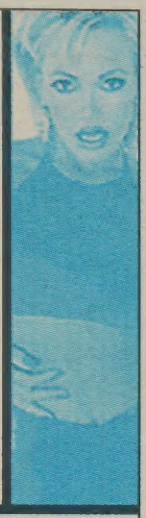

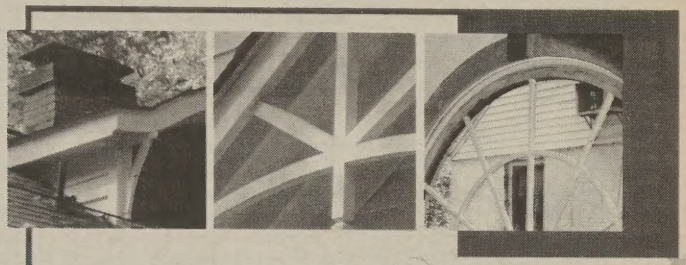

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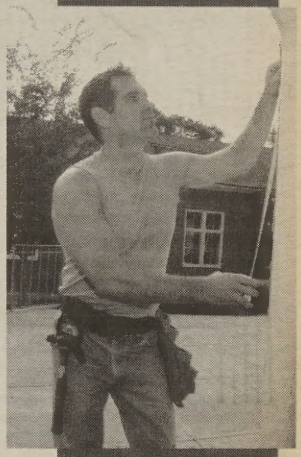

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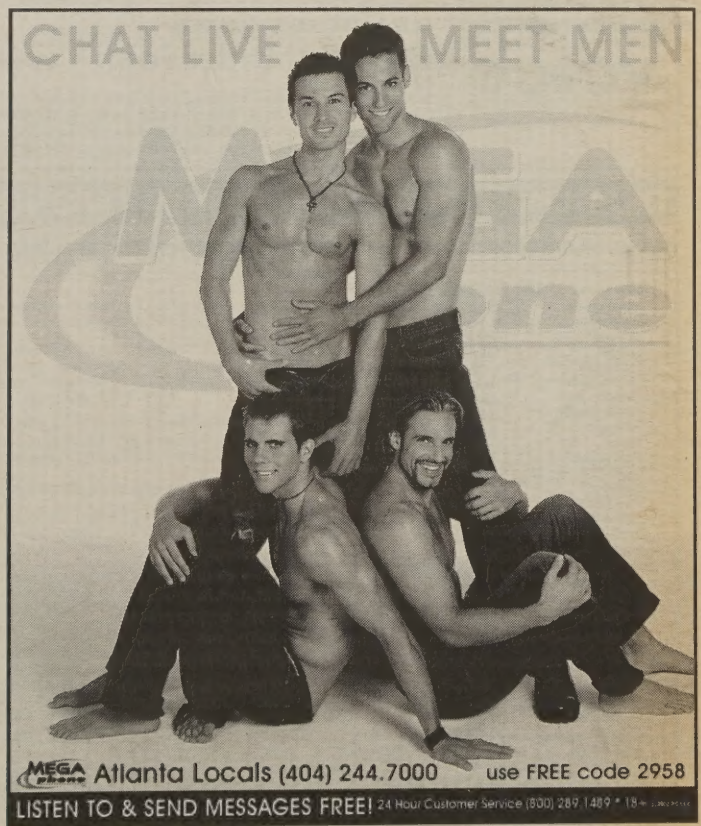
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Atlanta area Metropolitan Community Churches

invite you to worship with us this Holy Week/Easter Season

Easter is a time of New Beginnings

Spring is a time of new beginnings in nature. We invite you to let this Easter be a time of new beginnings in your spiritual journey, as well. Please join us for worship on Easter Sunday!

Rev. Paul Cortez, Senior Pastor
First MCC of Atlanta

Easter Week Events

Palm Sunday Worship Service
A dramatic service to kick-off Easter Holy Week with energy!
11 a.m. on Sunday, April 13 - *Special Breakfast at 8 a.m.!*

Taize Service
Candlelight and quiet reflection mark this unique style of worship
7 p.m. on Wednesday, April 16

Maundy-Thursday Service
An emotional and special observance of The Last Supper
7 p.m. on Thursday, April 17

Good Friday Service
Reflections on the crucixifion of Jesus Christ
7 p.m. on Friday, April 18

Easter Sunday/Miracle Sunday
A joyful celebration of Christ's victory and resurrection!
11 a.m. on Sunday, April 20

MCC
FIRST METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF ATLANTA
404-325-4143
Just off I-85 at the North Druid Hills exit
Right behind McDonald's

www.firstmcc.com

Join us Easter Sunday

for 11AM Service at
Truth Center Metropolitian Community Church

Evangelist Lamont Alford, Peaching

9 Gammon Ave S.W./ Capital Ave., Ga. Citizens Coalition on Hunger
P.O. Box 6686, Atlanta, Ga. 30315
770-951-1380

Directions
Take 75/85 North, exit University Ave. Turn right at bottom of exit (south on University). Go to third light (Capitol Ave) make right on Capitol Ave. Continue past George Washington Carver High School, turn right at end of school. To your far left you will see Ga. Citizens Coalition on Hunger Bldg. Truth Center is located on the 1st floor to the right.

Take 75/85 South, exit University Ave. Turn left at bottom of exit (south on University). Go to third light (Capitol Ave) make right on Capitol Ave. Continue past George Washington Carver High School, turn right at end of school. To your far left you will see Ga. Citizens Coalition on Hunger Bldg. Truth Center is located on the 1st floor to the right.

CELEBRATE OUR RISEN SAVIOR WITH US EASTER SUNDAY!

Our hope

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH

Currently Meeting at:
The Presbyterian Student Center
1250 S. Lumpkin Street
Athens, GA
Sundays 11:00AM

Email: ourhope@aol.com • (706) 202-3723 • (706) 227-9343
Rev. Renee DuBose, Pastor

www.ourhopemcc.com

Holy Week Schedule:

April 13
Palm Sunday
Worship Service...11:00 am

April 17
Maundy Thursday
Communion Service...7:00 pm

April 18
Good Friday Service...7:00 pm

April 19
Marsha Stevens in Concert...7:00 pm
At Christ Covenant
(the concert is free, a love offering will be taken for Marsha's ministry)

April 20
Sunrise Easter Service...7:00 am
Easter Celebration Service...11:00 am
Easter Brunch...12:30 pm

Christ Covenant

Metropolitan Community Church
109 Hibernia Avenue
Decatur, GA 30030
404-373-2933
www.christcovenantmcc.org

Rev. Renne L. Shawver, Pastor
Rev. Teena Carpenter, Minister of Spiritual Development

CHRIST COVENANT
METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH

welcome to
a world of
sensation

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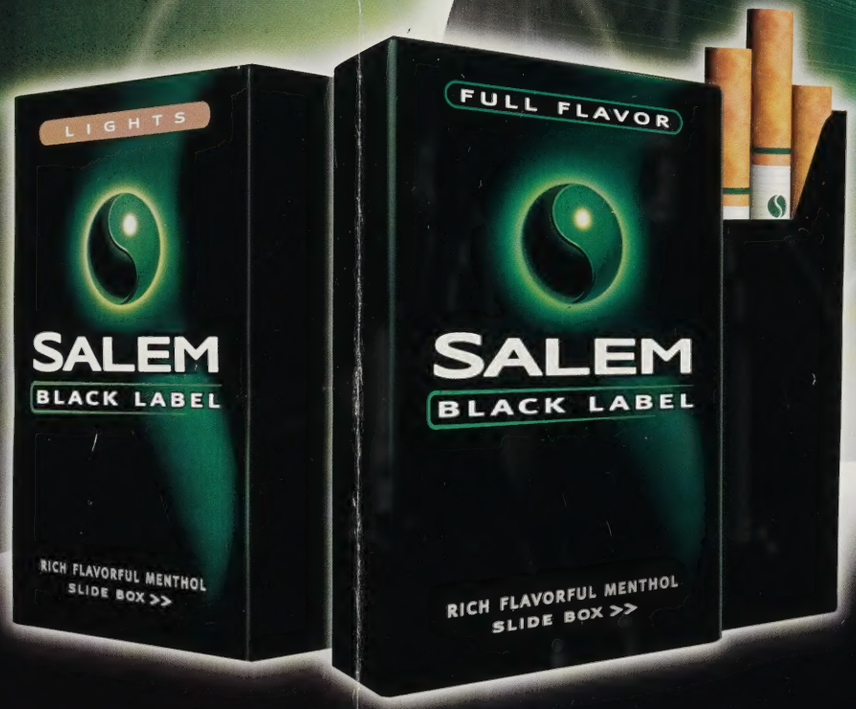
one world. two sensations.



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SALEM

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